The Little Sister of Wilifred

by the Author of

"Dear Daughter Dorothy"

Plympton
Little sister of Wilfred

Donald Dick

PEGGY.

WILIFRED.

THE LITTLE SISTER OF WILIFRED

BY

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LITTLE SISTER OF WILIFRED.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWIN BABIES.

WILIFRED was a sprite of a girl, so blithe and fresh and wholesome, so capricious and playful, that she reminded one of nothing so much as a frolicsome little wave sparkling under the sun of a breezy summer afternoon. She was remarkably pretty, with a tangle of red gold hair, and eyes that when she was a good, meek child were a soft and beautiful hazel, but on occasions when her rather peppery temper got the better of her became quite black.

Notwithstanding this fault of temper she was a most lovable little girl, with a warm, generous heart which would melt in a moment at the sight of another's distress, and she could never be happy again until she had made some plan to relieve it. Having a daring fancy and a venturesome spirit, these plans were often very ingenious and queer, and were never relinquished without a trial because of seeming difficulties. In short, she was the most persistent and determined little creature that was ever born into the perplexities and discouragements of this good old world, which is ever teaching us that there is nothing worth having in it without brave and patient effort.

Wilifred was one of the fortunate children at whose christening it seemed all the good fairies were present. She

was the idol of her papa, who, being a very rich man, was able to give her every advantage and pleasure. He was so good to her and she loved him so dearly she could not realize that she was only his child by adoption, and Dr. Moran himself so much disliked any mention of this fact that it was entirely ignored by everybody.

His friends said that he was prouder of Wilifred's beauty, courage, and cleverness than of his own valuable scientific discoveries.

Mrs. Moran for many years had been in delicate health, and was very languid and quiet. She liked all the shades drawn in the house, and did not very often go out of doors, because the "glare of the sun" hurt her eyes. Wherever she went, her maid followed her with a cushion and an armful of wraps. She

was very pretty and gentle, and with her soft eyes and cooing voice not unlike a lovely white dove. The Doctor and Wilifred were very proud of her. It seemed to them that she had had every disease under the sun. To have had so many, of course, she had been obliged to have more than one at a time, and was, as Wilifred once grandly remarked, a martyr to a complication.

There being nothing that Wilifred disliked so much as darkened rooms, she did not spend very much time with her mother, but was the constant companion of the Doctor, who never could see any reason why the child should not go wherever he went.

The Morans were great travellers, going from climate to climate in search of health for the invalid; and Wilifred at eight years of age was a good sailor,

a famous pedestrian, and a perfectly fearless horsewoman. To see the little damsel on a horse, looking so bold and so radiant, was to fall in love with her at once.

As for her early history, she had learned it in part from her old nurse, who had been promptly discharged for speaking of the forbidden subject; but this was so long ago, and the subject having never again been alluded to in her presence, she had almost forgotten it.

The Doctor flattered himself that she had *entirely* forgotten it, and that there was no one with whom she ever came in contact, except her mother and himself, who remembered how and when he had found her, and no solicitation would have drawn from him a description of the pretty scene of the occasion of their first meeting, which he so well remembered.

This happened soon after he and Mrs. Moran had decided to adopt a little girl to bring up as a sister to their own sturdy lads. The Doctor was fond of all children; but if one is to adopt a child it is as well to select one to whom Dame Nature has been kind, and given beauty and health and a good disposition, these being advantages that all the Doctor's money could not buy.

One day, then, several years before this story begins, Dr. Moran received a letter informing him that, if he would go to a certain home for friendless children, he would find just such a child as he was in search of.

Mrs. Moran being too ill at that time to leave the house, he went alone to this institution, where he found the prettiest little twin sisters imaginable. They had soft hazel eyes, and rings of red gold

hair covered their heads, curling up from the sweetest of white baby necks. Their mouths were like rose-buds, — that is, like mouths that are called rose-buds, — and when they smiled it gave a dimple in each cheek. Everybody agreed that they were remarkably pretty babies, and everybody always added, that they looked so much alike it was impossible to tell one from the other.

The little creatures took Dr. Moran's heart by storm, but the question now was which of the two to choose, for they were not only equally pretty, but one was just as strong, just as bright, and had just as sweet a disposition as the other. So at least Mrs. Purdy, the matron, said, adding that it seemed a great pity they should ever be separated. This was just what the good

Doctor himself had been thinking, as he sat watching the two babies playing so prettily together on the floor.

The longer he watched them, the more wicked it seemed, and he declared that before deciding he would consult Mrs. Moran, and if she favored the plan he would take both children.

Mrs. Moran, however, was distinctly of the opinion that the second baby would be a superfluity in the family.

"For heaven's sake, Gilbert," she said to her husband, "you must have forgotten how loud one baby by itself can scream. Urged on by competition, it would certainly be more than my poor head could stand."

"But these are healthy babies," urged the Doctor eagerly, "and they never cry. The matron told me so."

At which remark Mrs. Moran skepti-

cally replied, that she had seen a great many babies, but she had never seen the variety that do not cry.

"And you shall have a nurse for each," the Doctor went on. "I wish you had seen the little things together, and then you would never have the heart to separate them. Our two boys and the two girls will make a pretty family. I think we had better take them both."

"Why not adopt all the children at the home? I am sure that would be a lovely family, and large enough to please even you," laughed his wife. And she would give the subject no more serious consideration.

Much disappointed, the next day Dr. Moran took the boys' old nurse and drove to the home. He sat down and earnestly examined the two little crea-

tures as they stood by the matron's knee staring at him in true baby fashion.

They were about fourteen months old, could speak half a dozen words, and had just learned to walk alone. Presently, one of the babies, having apparently come to a decision sooner than the Doctor, now balanced herself on her feet, held out her little hands, and tottered across the floor straight into his arms.

"Papa! papa!" she cried, looking up into his face and laughing.

"Since I can have but one, I shall take this little trot," the Doctor said, smiling down upon the baby's upturned face. "She seems to have decided the question herself. Yes, I will take this one."

As he concluded, he looked a moment at the less adventurous baby. The

"PAPA! PAPA!" SHE CRIED, LOOKING UP INTO HIS FACE AND LAUGHING.

child, as if in dismay at her sister's boldness, had buried her head in the matron's lap, and was watching them from one uncovered eye. The kind soul took her up on her lap in a pitying way, which led the Doctor to say, "You will easily find a home for her too. They are wonderfully pretty children."

'It 's not always easy to find just the right place for 'em, Sir," she answered, shaking her head. "I should n't like to give up this pretty little thing to some one who would make a servant of her. That 's what folks that come here for children usually want of 'em."

"O no, — that would be a pity, — I hope it won't come to that," said the Doctor looking regretfully at the child. "I wish I could have taken her too, but it 's impossible."

So, the matter being settled, the

chosen baby was wrapped up, and was just about to be carried away when Mrs. Purdy interposed. She must have been a tender-hearted woman, having seen so many ties broken, to be still moved to pity at the sight.

"Just let me have her, Dr. Moran, for a minute. It aint as if they were only just common sisters: they are twins, you know, and it seems as if the Lord had n't sent the two into the world together for nothin'. There aint such a pressin' need of more folks in the world that He should have sent an extra one along just to help fill up. It seems as if he meant 'em for a help an' comfort to each other along the march."

She took the future Wilifred and sat down on the sofa by which the little sister was standing. Quite unconscious of the sad meaning of the moment, the

children being placed side by side, looked at each other with their wide tranquil baby eyes.

"Poor little sister!" the matron said to Wilifred, while she stroked the soft cheek of the other baby. "Kiss her, darlin', for you are all the relation she has, an' you are goin' where you 'll never see her again. Kiss her."

"Poor! poor!" echoed Winifred, brightly, imitating with her own the caressing motion of the matron's hand.

Then, laughing and crowing, she was carried away, the little sister shaking her own dimpled hands, pathetically ignorant that she was left without a tie to a human being in the world.

With many kisses the matron took her back to the nursery. "It 's a dreadful queer world, darlin'," she murmured. "It goes easy with some an' terrible

hard with others. An' you are a poor little waif that nobody's wantin'."

But the baby was not dismayed at her prospects in life. She curled herself down on the matron's shoulder, and cooed as contentedly as if she had been adopted by a millionaire.

CHAPTER II.

WILIFRED.

IT was in the spring following Wilifred's ninth birthday that the Morans returned from Italy with the intention of settling down upon their native heath. They had visited all the health resorts that had ever been heard of, but Mrs. Moran was still very delicate.

"Mamma will be more likely to find her health here than in any foreign country," said Wilifred, who was delighted to be in America again. "She lost it before she went away, and I think people had always better look for things where they lose them."

The Doctor bought a fine old place in, or rather near, his native town. It was a pleasant college town, which may be called Bridgemont.

"We shall be able to 'preciate a home after knocking about so long," Wilifred remarked when her father told her of this arrangement. "Won't it be nice and queer to stay all the time in one climate, and not have Estelle always packing or unpacking our things? I 'm so glad it 's a country place. Is it the really, truly country, papa, where there are fields with cows in 'em, and nice old barns and haystacks, and lots of chickens and pigs and horses and dogs and things?"

"Yes, it 's the genuine country, although I might not have described it in such a poetical style, my dear," answered the Doctor, pulling one of Wilifred's curls.

"Of course you would n't, you poor prosy papa! But

> I am a poet
> And want you to know it,
> For, say what you please,
> You never can tease
> Me."

This had been Wilifred's earliest poetical effort. As it had not been appreciated as poetry, she had graciously allowed it to serve as a joke, saying philosophically, that after all she liked jokes a great deal better than she did poetry.

"Delhaven," her papa went on, "is as beautiful a country place as I know of in America, having every natural advantage, ancestral elms and all. The house in itself is delightful, and, Will, there is the prettiest room with an oriel window, which shall be yours, my darling."

"Yes, thank you, papa!" said Wilifred. "But do tell me about the stables. How many stalls are there?"

"All we shall want, — ten or twelve, I should say," was the answer.

"If there are so many, papa, you might let me have *one.* I'll exchange that room with the oriel window for it."

"I don't think the little brass bedstead I bought for you will suit the style of the stall," the Doctor objected gravely. He adored his little daughter, but he could not refrain from teasing her.

"O papa! don't joke," she cried.

"Why not? I thought you liked jokes."

"I don't feel jokey now, papa. I 'm awfully serious about the stall, and of course nobody thinks of sleeping there. I supposed you would not give me an *empty* stall, for that would n't be a very useful present. I can ride just as well as the boys, and they are each to have a horse."

"Very well; you shall have a horse too, you wheedling little monkey."

"And a dog. I never could have horses and dogs because we were always travelling about so. What 's the good of settling down, if I can't have a dog?"

"None at all. I am going to settle down just so you can have one."

"I like mastiffs," said Wilifred, paying no attention to this jest, "they are so splendid and so big. Collies are nice too, they run and jump so. And there are those awfully 'cute little terriers with their bright eyes. Every one must like them. And pugs, papa, the dear ugly little things! I like pugs and setters of course, and hounds and spaniels."

"And you would like a few of each, I suppose," laughed Dr. Moran, taking

the cigar from his lips to kiss the eager little face beside him. "Well, we will have some dogs, my dear. You and Arthur and I all love animals, don't we? Arthur says he must have a pointer."

"Yes, papa, he wants it for hunting. I don't think Arthur is very fond of animals; he just likes to shoot things. I think it's horrid of him to kill the dear little birds, and I hope his pointer won't point. But, dear me, how jolly it will be to have a horse! You won't buy one for me that's too gentle, will you? for you know I like to ride fast. And you know, papa, I will need a habit, for I had so outgrown the old one that mamma left it in Italy."

"A habit? Oh, certainly. Can't you think of something else you would like?"

The Doctor spoke in jest, but he had so often asked a similar question in earnest that the little girl took him at his word, and answered promptly:

"Why, yes, papa, lots of things. Since the time you asked me and I could n't think of anything I have kept a list."

"Dear me! was there ever such a time? I am sure I don't remember it."

"I do. I have never forgotten it," said Wilifred pensively. "It was so stupid of me, and when it was too late I did think of something that I wanted very much. But what I am going to ask for now is a phaeton," she went on brightly. "If I have a horse, I may as well have a phaeton, and perhaps I can coax mamma into driving with me sometimes, — that is, when the weather

is just right, for you know mamma is very particular about the weather."

"Very well," was the answer. "You shall have the phaeton, but you must remember that you are not to go out alone in it, for, although you drive very well, you are yet a small child. And what should I do if any accident were to happen to you?"

From the foregoing conversation it may be seen how little Will was indulged by the Doctor. To all remonstrances he would reply with a shrug, and declare there never was a child more unselfish than she was, which was a proof that he was not spoiling her.

Wilifred often thought that of the two her papa was really the least bit fonder of her than her mamma, and the truth is, that in the fulness of her

health and spirits Wilifred sometimes tried Mrs. Moran very much, and it was impossible for her to sympathize with her tastes as her father did. Then, too, although Wilifred was very sorry for her poor delicate mamma, and loved her very much, she could not realize how a trifling noise would set her nerves aching and tingling, and how much more comfortable she was with only quiet and gentle persons around her.

By the middle of May the Morans were really settled at Delhaven, and Will was enchanted.

Each day seemed to bring with it some pleasant surprise, until she declared that the only surprise possible for her would be not to be surprised at all.

At first, she had feared that the new

home was not in what she called the "real country, but in a citified country place, where things would be trim and stylish." Wilifred had no taste for suburbs. But as they drove from the station to Delhaven it was over a genuine old country road lying among the varied charms of fertile green fields, woods, and scrubby pastures. The scrubbier they were, the better they pleased Wilifred.

The new house pleased her too, having been built in a generous and comfortable style, with many city conveniences, of which, after all, she never complained. The coveted stall once hers, she had no objection to the pretty room with its graceful furnishings, — with its shelves of books and dainty toilet articles.

The day this room was first occu-

pied, the stable too had an inmate, — a beautiful little chestnut mare, which oddly enough received from its mistress the name of Black Beauty.

"I don't see why not," Wilifred said, when her brother Arthur objected to this. "I knew a girl once who was named Lily, and she was just as dark as an Indian. You have named your horse Colonel, but he is no more a colonel than my horse is black."

And Arthur at once confessed that Wilifred, as usual, had made her point.

The Doctor bought two very fine dogs, — a mastiff and a Gordon setter. Then a collie was offered to him, which was much too handsome an animal to be refused. Arthur also had his pointer. But to whomsoever the dogs belonged, they were all of them devoted to Wili-

fred. One day a bright little Scotch terrier followed the phaeton from town, and, as its master could never be found, resided permanently at the Morans under the title of Tramp.

Among the various importations constantly coming to Delhaven there was one that did not please the little girl overmuch. This was a rather formal but highly accomplished lady as governess to Miss Wilifred.

It is a sad truth that this small personage would have been glad to postpone her education for an indefinite period. When she thought of this process, eventually to be passed through, she felt deeply the tenderness of her own age. It seemed to her a great pity that one cannot acquire knowledge as easily as one's physical growth. However, the governess having already

arrived, it was necessary to resign herself to the inevitable, — governesses, like horses and dogs, being as she supposed one of the results of settling down.

"There seems to be something bad that comes with everything that 's good," said this small philosopher, as she watched Miss Weston's trunks being carried into the house. "When it 's summer there must be mosquitos, but I 'd rather have summer come in spite of the mosquitos, and I 'm glad we 've settled down, even though I have to have a governess. To be sure it is n't quite the same thing, because you can put up nets and keep the mosquitos out, or if they get in you can kill 'em; but you have to be polite to a governess."

Wilifred always was very polite to her governess, and they became good

friends, although it is true, as Wilifred said, they were "not exactly the same kind."

"She is very nice, and I like her, but she 's queer," Wilifred explained. "She thinks it 's coarse to have so many dogs, and she always screams when a horse gets up on his hind legs, no matter whether anybody is hurt or not."

Everything was going on smoothly in the Moran family, when one day the boys came from the town with an astonishing story of a little girl they had seen there who was the very image of Wilifred.

"It is the most remarkable likeness you ever saw, Sir," said Randolph, the elder lad, to his father. "I never saw anything like it even between sisters."

"Nonsense! nonsense!" interrupted the Doctor, rather crossly. "You have seen another child with the same colored hair and eyes. There are plenty of children of Wilifred's complexion. You would laugh at yourself if you were to see them together."

"If they were dressed alike, I don't believe we could tell one from the other," persisted Arthur. "I want you to see her, that's all."

But the Doctor with a gesture dismissed the subject. No doubt he would have been glad if the little girl also could be so easily disposed of.

When Wilifred, who had been deeply interested in the boys' story, left the room, he reverted to it, but merely to beg them never to mention this child again.

In the afternoon, however, when he

went to the town, he had curiosity enough to step into the lodging-house called Bagley's, where he had been given to understand the little girl could be seen.

CHAPTER III.

THE "SLAVEY."

IT was a long time after Wilifred had been chosen by Dr. Moran for his future daughter before a home was found for her twin sister.

While one little girl became the petted child of this rich man, the other for some years was only one of twenty little orphans who owed their living to charity. One wore pretty clothes, had many toys, and was taken from one country to another, seeing what is most beautiful and interesting in the world. The other wore the plain uniform of the asylum, had no toys to speak of, and her pretty eyes had hardly looked beyond the bare walls of the ugly insti-

tution building. More important than all, one child was surrounded by the love of her adopted parents, while the other grew up with only an occasional smile or kind word from the matron, who of all people should not be blamed, for without defrauding the nineteen other children in her care, how could she give any one of them more than the twentieth part of her love?

The child reached her second year, and, no one coming forward to adopt her, she was christened by the name of her kind friend, the matron, Margaret Purdy.

At six years of age little Margaret — called Peggy — started out in the world for herself. She was oh so brave and so happy about it! for she seemed to fancy that this step was a promotion in life, and she did n't in the least know

what the world was like. How could she, being only six years old, and never having seen anything of it except that tiny section called the home?

This little Peggy had a remarkably lovely face, an active mind, a patient spirit, and a healthy body. She was to start in life as a servant in the house of a livery stable keeper, whose wife took lodgers, which is not, on the whole, a very elevated position in the world.

The place was not such a one as her friends at the asylum had wished for her; but she was getting on in years, at least as an inmate of that particular institution, where the children rarely remained after the age of five. Moreover, it was promised that she should go to school, and be decently brought up; and who could know that these promises were not to be fulfilled?

So one day little Margaret, smiling and glad, kissed the friends of her baby-hood, and courageously started forth with her tiny hand in that of a strange woman's, for the lodging-house known in Bridgemont as Bagley's.

Here in spite of her tender years, and the stipulation that she was to go to school, Peggy was put immediately to work. All day she was at the beck and call of a dozen people, running here and there for them, fetching this and that, earning the name, by which Mr. Bagley sometimes called her, of little Miss Step-and-fetch-it.

The lodgers were nearly all collegians. If they wished for anything, they had a habit of coming out into the hall and calling loudly for "Slavey," until the quick patter of little feet answered the summons. There was no

one to think that perhaps Peggy ran altogether more than was good for her.

Mrs. Bagley was an ignorant woman, with a great many cares and a sharp

MRS. BAGLEY.

tongue. She was stout, with red hair, snapping black eyes, and, as it seemed at a first glance, a great many chins. Her head hung back on her shoulders

and bobbed as she walked, in a way Peggy unconsciously imitated, to the great entertainment of the lodgers. As one may imagine, in such a house there was plenty of work to be done. When Mrs. Bagley was at work she always scolded, which was n't pleasant for the family, but, like the noise of a machine, had to be borne. Sometimes when she left off work she forgot to leave off scolding.

Mr. Bagley said he thought perhaps it rested her, but it did n't rest other people, and he was going to put his foot down and stop it. Peggy used to keep her eye on Mr. Bagley's feet, hoping that some time he would suddenly do as he threatened, and put one of them down. There was so much of it that she thought it ought to do some good, but when he put them down it was al-

ways to skip out of the way as fast as he could. It was more prudent, after all, to retreat to the stable, but of course Peggy could n't retreat to the stable, so she bore more than her share of the scoldings.

If the lodgers were unreasonable, if she were cheated by the butcher, if it rained on a washing-day, Mrs. Bagley scolded Peggy. She scolded her because she herself was so stout, and because Peggy was so very long in growing up. Peggy felt her guilt in these matters very deeply.

She was such a loving little soul, and was so very lonely, that with the least encouragement she would have loved this cross Mrs. Bagley with all her heart. Mrs. Bagley never admitted that she was cross, but she sometimes confessed to being *roused.* And Peggy

always spoke of her mistress's temper in the same delicate way. Although Mrs. Bagley was generally cross, she was sometimes not so cross as at others, and once she actually patted Peggy's head, and declared that, bad as she was, she might be worse.

The poor child had been overjoyed at this not very extravagant praise. She pressed up to Mrs. Bagley's side, and looked with her great velvety eyes into the little beady ones; and there is no knowing what she might have said if — some domestic mishap occurring at that moment — she had not been pushed crossly aside. To make love to Mrs. Bagley was certainly very discouraging business.

The world is full of kind-hearted people, and it would be strange if none such crossed Peggy's path. In the

course of time a good-natured young man came to Bagley's, and generously permitted Peggy to make an idol of him.

This Mr. Bolander at once discovered that the child was working harder than she should, and declared that, for his part, he did n't think a fellow who would let a little girl wear herself out to wait on him was much of a gentleman. He said this so loudly and so often that at last it reached the ears of a certain Mr. Fullerton, who had the next room to his, and who was constantly calling upon Peggy; and a terrible quarrel was the result of it. There were, no doubt, other reasons for the quarrel unknown to her, but at all events this speech was the beginning of it, and Peggy, who was a timid little creature, was always trying to prevent a collision between the two

men, and pathetically imploring Bolander not to fight a duel for her sake. That any human being should speak a word in her behalf was a wonderful thing to Peggy, and her gratitude knew no bounds.

Peggy's champion was a small man, with a boyish face and a gentle voice. His brown hair curled lightly all over his head and looked, Peggy admiringly thought, like a beautiful French doll's. He had pink cheeks, gray eyes, and a pair of ears that were certainly too large for beauty and projected very far from his head. These ears, together with a budding mustache that Peggy unkindly called his third eyebrow, prevented the likeness to the French doll being very pronounced. Bolander's allowance was small, so that he was obliged to cut down his expenses to the smallest possible

sum, and he wore coats that were very shiny, and trousers dreadfully baggy at the knee. In short, as he often said as he looked at himself in the little cracked mirror his landlady furnished, he had n't any sort of style. He was what the college boys call a dig, and had no time to make himself popular with anybody but the Slavey.

There were not many ways by which Peggy could show her gratitude, but one may be sure that Jack Bolander's match-box was always filled, that his room — one of Bagley's poorest — was carefully dusted, and the least worn of the towels put on his stand. Those that were especially thin and miserable usually found their way to Mr. Fullerton's room, who in consequence was always grumbling about boarding-house towels.

Peggy always dreaded going into Mr.

Fullerton's room, for, beside cordially disliking that young gentleman himself, he kept there two little dogs who, when she opened the door, flew out and snapped at her. If the dogs escaped she was obliged to fetch them back, — Mrs. Bagley not allowing them in any other part of the house, — and Peggy was dreadfully afraid of dogs.

It was a very large house the child often thought as she ran from one end of it to the other, and there were many rooms; but, oddly enough, there was no room for Peggy herself, who therefore slept in the attic in a sort of closet lighted by a skylight.

When she lay on her bed she could see through the skylight on some nights a particularly bright star, which with a little girl's liking for ownership she called her star. She thought it must be

the one Mrs. Bagley meant when she told her she might thank her lucky star that she had been taken away from that horrid home into a respectable family. Peggy was very grateful that she had a lucky star at all, and she hoped it would help her to become good and wise and rich. It is really a pity to add the third adjective, as perhaps Peggy's ambition would seem nobler without it, but as the wish of a little girl who slept in a closet it is not after all to be wondered at.

The closet was bitter cold in winter, and hot and stifling in summer, but was very nice in spring and fall, Peggy said, for she was a patient little thing who never nursed her grievances. She was always sorry that after her long day's work, when she had the opportunity of quietly thinking of all the pleasant

things her lucky star would bring her, she should always fall asleep; but in reality this was the very luckiest thing that could possibly happen to a tired little girl who was a "slavey."

"Mr. Bolander," said Peggy one afternoon when she had come into his room with the towels and stopped for a few moments' chat with her hero, "did you ever hear of a self-made woman?"

"A self-made woman. What do you mean, chicken?"

"Why, I heard Professor Whitney talking about a very celebrated man, and he said he was a *self-made* man. He never had any advantages, the Professor said, and no money, no one to help him, and he had to do everything for himself. And now he is very celebrated. Could a *woman* make herself?"

"Why yes, certainly," said Mr. Bo-

"Well, then, that's what I mean to do. Do you know that, although I'm quite willing to be a slavey just for now," Peggy said with a smile, "I don't want to be one always. I would n't tell Mrs. Bagley this, because she might think I am ungrateful."

"I should think so," grunted Bolander, scowling, as he always did when his landlady was mentioned.

"Yes, I'll be a self-made woman," Peggy went on. She was afraid of almost every one, but not of Jack Bolander, — not even when he scowled. "Do you think it will be very difficult? I suppose it's easier to have some one else make you than to make yourself."

"To be self-made means an awful grind, Peg," said her friend in such a way that she broke out, —

"Why, you mean to be self-made too!

Well, I know you will come out all right. There 's no trouble about you, who are so awfully clever. I wonder what I can be?"

"What do you want to be, dear?" asked the young man very gently, as he lifted the poor little thing on his knee. "There was once a poor washerwoman who became the Empress of Russia."

"Oh, I don't want to be the Empress of Russia," said Peggy, rather dolefully. "I 've never been an empress yet, and I don't know as I should like it. I don't know how to speak Russian, and it 's so far away you would never get to see me."

"Well, you are not obliged against your will to be the Empress of Russia," Bolander reminded her, "and there are lots of other things. For instance, you might be a prima donna and tra la la yourself into a fortune. How does that

strike you? I shall go and fling bouncing bouquets at Mademoiselle Peggiana Purdioso."

"I am afraid I could n't be that," said Peggy, laughing. "I can't sing worth a cent, Mrs. Bagley says, and she ought to know, for she sings beautifully herself. Did n't you ever hear her sing,

'Are we almost there? are we almost there?'

It 's the song of a girl that 's dying, and she plays a lovely accompaniment on the piano."

"Who, the girl that 's dying? I should think she would be too weak."

"No, Mrs. Bagley, of course. They are taking her home to die, you know. It goes like this."

Peggy straightened herself at the table, drew in her chin with a view to making it double, and, casting her eyes

toward the ceiling, began to play an imaginary tune on an imaginary piano. Then in a very deep voice she sang:

> "Are we almost there? are we almost there?
> Said the dying girl to her mother fair."

"It's lovely, but I've forgotten the rest. It always makes me want to cry."

"So it does me, — just howl," said Bolander. "Yes, I've seen her do it. Perhaps you could do something in the burlesque business. I did n't know before you had a talent for that sort of thing, but on the whole I don't believe that would suit you. You are going to be one of those dovey kind of women that don't feel at home in a crowd. The soft-eyed kind, with hair brought down like that," he said, laughing, as he tried to flatten Peggy's curls down on either side of her pretty forehead, "and

I must try and think of some genteel thing you can do at home."

"I don't know how to do anything but to sweep and dust, and to wait on people," said Peggy, rather sadly.

"You certainly are sufficiently practised in that last art; but though it requires the patience of a saint, it never leads to glory."

"I don't care for glory, I want to be rich. You are making fun of me, Mr. Bolander, 'cause you know I could n't be any of the fine things you say. But you know one might be different from me and yet not be an empress, or any of those other kind of ladies you spoke of."

"Yes, so you might," admitted Bolander, stroking the rough little hand of the slavey.

"There 's Mrs. Bagley. She is n't an empress, but she is a great deal better

off than I am," said Peggy. "But then I want to be different from Mrs. Bagley."

"She is n't my ideal either, Peggy; but we are an ambitious lot."

"Mr. Brewer, who lives in the handsome house on the corner," went on Peggy, paying no attention to this playful sarcasm, "made all his money, Mr. Bagley says, by inventing an egg-beater. Just an egg-beater! Mrs. Bagley bought one the other day, so as to be neighborly, I suppose, and I have used it. It makes your arm ache dreadfully, but he got rich by it all the same. Then there was the man that invented rubber for the end of pencils. Mr. Bagley said he made heaps of money, and I 've made up my mind that the best thing for me to do is to invent something, — I don't know what exactly.

The only thing I have thought of yet is a rubber for the *other* end of the pencil."

"That's a strikingly original idea," laughed Mr. Bolander. Then he looked at her again, and his boyish eyes filled with tears as he thought of her helplessness. He put her down on the floor, and, walking up and down, he said to himself: "The poor little mite! If ever I succeed, if ever I'm able to do more than drag my miserable self along, I'll help this poor chicken."

"Peggy," he asked, suddenly sitting down again, "do you know the multiplication table?"

"No," said Peggy, sadly, "I don't."

"Do you know how to read, dear?"

"Not much, Mr. Bolander."

"Have you ever been to school?"

"Yes, I went a week once all at one

time. I ought to have learned to read then, when I had such a good chance.

BOLANDER AND PEGGY.

And beside that I 've been to school on extra days now and then, but usually there has been too much to do at home.

There is no time for anything, you know, if you take lodgers, Mr. Bolander," added Peggy, probably quoting Mrs. Bagley. "It 's work from Monday till Saturday, and even the blessed Sabbath is no day of rest for me."

"So it is n't; and a great shame, too, you poor abused child!"

"O no, I am not abused. Mrs. Bagley is very kind, you know, to give me a home and all my clothes," said Peggy, looking down gratefully at the graceless brown frock and patched pinafore she wore. "She says it costs a fortune to keep me in shoes, and she can't think how I wear them out so fast."

"Can't she?" growled Bolander. "Well, you tell her that, if she did n't keep you running all day long, your shoes would n't cost her so much."

"I don't think she would like it if I were to tell her that. It would sound as if I were complaining, you know, and I don't mean to complain. What 's the use when I 'm going to invent something, and be rich enough to have what I like by and by," said Peggy, cheerfully.

"What I would do if I were in your place, Peg, would be to learn the multiplication table, to read well, and to write a good plain hand," advised Bolander.

"But, you know," suggested Peggy, gently, "I have n't very much time, and beside I 'm afraid I should n't know how to begin. I 'm 'most too stupid to learn such hard things all by myself, but if you think I could, I might try. I suppose if I 'm to be self-made, I ought to do it alone."

Fortunately, Mr. Bolander did not

think she need push things to this extreme. His intention was to persuade Mrs. Bagley to let the child come to him for an hour's instruction each afternoon.

"That 's what it is to have a lucky star," said Peggy, when this plan was explained to her. "But you know you study yourself in the afternoon, and Mrs. Bagley — she would n't feel that she could spare me."

Peggy never knew what arts Mr. Bolander practised upon Mrs. Bagley, but at a certain hour each afternoon she was released from work with the gracious remark, "Now scoot. If those orphan asylum folks knew of the advantages I 'm giving you with a private tooter, like the child of a dook, I should think they might be satisfied."

So Peggy would joyfully fling down

her dish-towel or her broom, as the case might be, and skip upstairs to more congenial tasks.

The story got abroad that Bolander was teaching trigonometry to the slavey, and he was ridiculed unmercifully for a simple act of kindness, but no amount of ridicule could alter his purpose.

"I may be deficient in humor," he would say, "but I can't see anything so funny in helping a little girl who has the good sense to care for an education."

Sometimes their whole hour would be wasted by these frolicsome young gentlemen, who would beat a tattoo on the door until Peggy's little head whirled, and Mr. Bolander danced about the room in helpless anger.

Once a number of them, each wearing a checked pinafore and carrying a book

under his arm, followed her into the room, and recited in chorus, " Mary had a little lamb." They looked so absurd, that Peggy could not help laughing; but Mr. Bolander jumped up in a great rage and burst out, in a tone that was meant to be very dignified, " Gentlemen, this no longer ceases to be funny."

A speech which was followed by such shouts of laughter that it was some time before he could add, pointing to distressed little Peggy, " If you must have diversion, don't let it be at the expense of a friendless little thing like that."

Perhaps the young men realized the meanness of their fun, for one by one they departed, leaving Peggy and Bolander masters of the field.

CHAPTER IV.

A PUZZLING QUESTION.

IT is wonderful how far a little girl's education can progress with only an hour a day for study. At the end of one year Peggy had some knowledge of the three R's. The truth is, that beside having a natural love of books, the poor child was secretly trying to "catch up with Mr. Bolander." Her chief ambition was to undertake the study of Latin, and at the completion of each task she would look up with those patient wistful eyes of hers into Bolander's face and ask if it were not almost time to begin.

It was because they were so very patient and wistful, and Jack Bolander's

heart so very soft, that one day in a weak moment he yielded. It was weak of him, because he really felt that it would be better for Peggy first to learn simple things, but his consent gave her such pleasure that he really could not withdraw it.

When he took down from his shelf a Latin grammar, and, opening it before her, repeated a few words that he said she might learn, Peggy's heart nearly burst with pride.

It was the declension of a Latin noun, and it may be that he had no idea what a tremendous task he was setting for his pupil, or perhaps he thought the ordeal of learning it would weaken her wish to study the language. If this was his plan it did not work as he anticipated, for Peggy would have studied all night rather than fail in this lesson. When

the time came to recite it, the old familiar words came tripping from her rosy lips in a way that sent Bolander off into peals of laughter.

"What 's the matter? did n't I say it right?" Peggy anxiously inquired.

"You are such a mite, Peg, you have n't an idea how funny it sounds. Just say it again, will you?"

So once more she carefully pronounced the words, which were followed by another shout of laughter.

"Oh hush! there goes Mr. Fullerton, and he 'll be coming in to see what 's the matter."

"Let him come," said Bolander amiably. "It 's as good as the circus anyhow. Peggy, what earthly use do you ever expect to have for Latin?"

"Why, I did n't suppose it 's ever of any *use* to anybody. Is it, Mr. Bolan-

der? What use will it ever be to you?"

"I am going to be a doctor, you know, and will have to write my prescriptions in Latin. Don't you know if they are not written in Latin they won't effect a cure?"

"You are trying to chaff me," cried Peggy, who of course picked up all sorts of queer college words. "Goose oil is not a Latin name, and it cured my sore throat."

"But this is n't telling me why you wish to study Latin," persisted Bolander. "You must explain yourself."

"Well, maybe I 'll be a doctor too."

"That 's gammon. You 're going to be an inventor, you know."

"I may invent pills, and they won't effect a cure unless they have a Latin name," cried Peggy in triumph.

Mr. Bolander had first taken notice of Peggy out of pity, but he came to care for her very much. He often thought he should always remember the little figure in its rather dirty brown frock studying Latin at his side as that of the only intimate friend he had made during his college days. He was a sociable fellow, and, having found that a secret was safe with Peggy, often took her into his confidence. Thus she came to know very well how many economies unknown to the other young men he was forced to practise, in order to go through the college course, and she did her little best to cheer and help him. She had cut off the frayed edges of his cuffs until they were pinked all round where the scissors had slipped, and she had slashed into the linen, and his hat was almost worn out with frequent brushing.

If he only were dressed in such smart suits as the other boys wore, she was sure he would look very handsome; and when after much pinching he bought his new mackintosh, Peggy was as pleased as if it had been a new dress for herself. When the examinations came off, the little girl's anxiety equalled his own. How could he help loving her, even if she were but a little servant, and not always over clean?

But Mr. Bolander was destined to make other friends than Peggy. The first of these was Randolph, the elder of Dr. Moran's two sons.

Randolph was to enter college the following fall, and hoped that he was qualified to enter the second year, in which case he would be a classmate of Bolander's. It was upon his first visit to Bolander's room that he saw Peggy,

for it was the little girl's study hour at that time.

"She is the very image of my little sister," he said, staring at her in astonishment. "By the likeness any one would take them for twin sisters. Whose kid is she, Bolander? Where does she come from?"

"She comes from Mrs. Bagley's kitchen. She is my landlady's assistant," Bolander answered, "and she has a turn for the classics. Peggy, my dear, we are so nearly through with the lessons I think I will let you off now."

But before she was permitted to go Randolph called Arthur, who was also in the house, who came and testified to the likeness.

When released, Peggy went upstairs to her closet with the skylight, and, a few minutes of her hour yet remaining,

she threw herself down on her cot. As she lay there a great many thoughts came swarming into her little head, — thoughts principally of the home and the kind matron there, who used to tell her sometimes of the day she and a little twin sister were first brought to her, and the pretty way they played together, like two kittens, on the floor. A gentleman had come, at length, and carried away her little sister. He had adopted her as a child of his own, Peggy was told, and she would probably never see her again.

But this sometimes seemed to her too cruel to believe. When she first came to the Bagleys, in the terrible loneliness of the big houseful of people, all careless of herself, she thought continually of the matron's story, and comforted herself with the belief that some time she would

find her sister, and they would live together as other sisters did.

But children's memories are short. When Mr. Bolander came and befriended her, Peggy's mind was filled with other thoughts. He was much more interesting than a sister she could not remember, and whom she was never again to see.

But now as she lay on the cot looking up to the square patch of blue sky above the skylight she carefully recalled every word she had ever heard about her sister.

It seemed as if this little girl they spoke of must be the same child that had played with her at the home; and yet if she were the sister of these fine young gentlemen she could not be hers. It was a terrible puzzle to Peggy.

At length, one day she slipped out of

the house determined to see this little girl who was said to bear such a wonderful likeness to herself.

When she reached Dr. Moran's grounds, Wilifred happened to be playing tennis with Arthur, — the Doctor watching the game from one of the seats under the maple trees. It was he who spied poor Peggy as she stood by the wall, looking with curious eyes at Wilifred as she darted hither and thither over the ground.

Peggy was thinking, as she stood there, that this little girl in her pretty dress and jaunty tennis cap, although much more beautiful, yet bore a strange resemblance to the reflection she sometimes caught in the mirrors of the lodging-house slavey. She had just such a tangle of red gold curls, just such soft hazel eyes, and a nose and a mouth

"WHAT DO YOU WANT HERE?" HE ASKED.

which for the first time it occurred to her were very pretty. As for the little girl's companions she hardly saw them, so that when the Doctor suddenly spoke close beside her she gave a start of surprise.

"What do you want here?" he asked, in a tone which he tried to make sharp, but which his really kind heart forbade.

The look Peggy gave him from out her timid eyes carried him back to that day when she had hidden her face in the matron's lap, while her sister had toddled across the floor to his side. Then he had wished to carry her off with the other child; but now his chief desire was that he might never, or more particularly that Wilifred might never see her again. For the Doctor was a proud man, and he did not like to think

that this girl, so ragged, dirty, and humble, could claim any kinship to his little daughter; and beside he wished Wilifred to identify herself with his own family, and never realize that she had a sister of her own.

At the sudden question, shy little Peggy moved away from the stone wall upon which she had been leaning, and answered, "I only wanted to see the little girl; I 'm not doing any harm."

"You are loosening the stones in the wall," said the Doctor, feeling that on some pretext or other he must drive the harmless, soft-eyed little creature away. He took a coin from his pocket, and, hardening his heart, went on, "Take this and be off, and don't let me catch you hanging about here again."

He felt like a brute as he watched her move obediently on in the direction

his cruel forefinger indicated, — but at least Will had not even seen her. Peggy's eyes had that dumb, patient look that is seen in the eyes of ill-used animals, — touching, because it seems as if they realized their own helplessness; and she turned them to him as she walked away, making him feel still more uncomfortable. It is a sad thing to be forbidden even so much as to look at one's own sister, — the only relation she had in the world, as the matron had told him.

It seemed like a cruel breaking of one of the sweetest ties of nature, and although he could form for Wilifred other ties to take the place of this, yet who had considered the wrong to this lonely little girl, that, as he had been told, was merely the servant of a lodging-house keeper?

The coin which the child had not even noticed was still in his hand. He dropped it into his pocket and walked on, devising a scheme which he hoped would atone for any wrong he might have done to Peggy.

CHAPTER V.

CONTRASTS.

AS she walked home, Peggy felt that she was no nearer the solution of the puzzle than before. It did not seem to her that the dainty little creature she had just seen could be the same child that as a baby had played with her on the floor at the home.

She was thinking too intently of this matter to be much troubled by what the Doctor had said. Beside, she was too accustomed to snubs to be astonished or to resent them, accepting them meekly as the hard luck of a slavey. Moreover, half-way between Delhaven and the town she came upon a bit of

roadside literally gemmed with violets. Sisters were sometimes unsubstantial property, it seemed, but the violets were really before her, and oh how big and sweet they were!

She remembered once having heard Mr. Bolander say that he thought no flower was so beautiful; and Peggy thought it would be pleasant to gather a whole bunch of them, and place them on his table as a surprise. However, it was too late to gather them then, for there were yet many tasks to be performed at home.

So, promising herself to come for the violets the following afternoon, she went happily on.

Mrs. Bagley had been receiving a call, and had not even noticed Peggy's absence. She was in a wonderfully good-natured and sociable mood, and

for the want of an older listener began talking to Peggy.

"I can tell you Mis' Brewer holds her head pretty high, but why should n't she, with all the money they 've made out of that egg-beater. She don't set so much by education as I do. I could see that; but lor', there 's odds in passengers. That shawl she wore would be a *passe-pour-tout*, as the French say, into any s'ciety, though shawls has rather gone by. I studied French when I was a girl, Peg." (Mrs. Bagley pronounced this word *geurl* when she was in company, and she was still speaking as if she thought Mrs. Brewer might be hidden under the sofa.) "To be sure, I never got so 's to speak it, but my father paid enough for me to have learned to speak it like a native born, and that comes to the same thing. He gave his children

every advantage, for he used to say they were of good breed and worth training. Lor'! I little thought in them palmy days how all the accomplishments he was a-paying for would be wasted in this kitchen. I never walked into the kitchen in them days, for we kep' plenty of help, — colored help, — my mother would n't have white women, because she said they always wanted to mix and mingle with you. An' to think," exclaimed Mrs. Bagley, pathetically, with a disparaging look at her meek little handmaid, — "to think how I have now to do all my work with only a worthless young one to help me."

"I 'm growing as fast as I can," said Peggy, swallowing her mortification, with a smiling resolve to grow as fast and be as useful as she could, and thus make the contrast between

those palmy days and the present less painful.

"You 'll take your time about it, I expect," snapped Mrs. Bagley. "Children from 'sylums, that folks bring up to be a help to 'em, are always slow growers. Well, as I was saying, we geurls had every advantage. I could have gone to Europe and taken lessons of the old masters if I 'd wanted to, but I was always retiring. That 's been the trouble with me, or I should have made my mark long ago. Seems 's if 't was an awful sacrifice to have gone an' married Bagley, but 't is as 't is. I 'spect the powers that be must have seen he could never have got along by himself."

And now, suddenly, Mrs. Bagley resumed her usual manner, saying crossly, "Bagley! He don't no more care

whether I slave myself to death than you do. What under the canopy do you set there starin' at me for with all there is in this house to do? Go to work this minute, Peg."

Thus being brought back to the realities of life, Peggy now flew about to make up for lost time; but it was already growing dark when she went upstairs with the lamps. The rooms were nearly all vacant, and Peggy, depositing the last and the best of the lamps on Mr. Bolander's table, sat down to take breath.

She curled herself up in his big chair, meaning to wait until he came in. Perhaps, having heard none all day, she longed for a kind word; for Mr. Bolander was cramming for an examination just then, and her lessons had been omitted. Perhaps she wished to know

how it had passed, and to give him the pleasant word instead of receiving it.

She heard the other young men come in, one by one, and then go out again for the evening; but Peggy still waited, and at last a very strange thing happened.

Some one quietly opened the door and stepped stealthily in. It was Fullerton, and she was so taken by surprise that she sat perfectly motionless while he tiptoed across the floor to the table. His back being toward her, Peggy could not see exactly what he was doing there, but she distinctly heard the rustling of papers. Presently, quite unconscious that the bright eyes of the slavey had been upon him, Fullerton crept out again.

Peggy was stunned, but she knew what she had seen. "He is playing

some mean joke off on Mr. Bolander," she whispered, with tears.

She waited until she heard him go down stairs, and knew that he was out of the house, and then went into his room and looked about it as if to find some explanation of his strange conduct.

"Why had he meddled with Mr. Bolander's papers?" she asked herself anxiously.

On his own table were a number of well written sheets of paper. One of these as Peggy touched it slipped out, and fell from the table into the waste-basket beneath. A slam of the front door now hurried Peggy from the room, in which she had no wish to be caught.

In the morning she meant to put the sheet of paper in its place with the others; but there was no time then, and in the mean time, if Mr. Fullerton had a

vain search for it, she told herself that it would be no more than he deserved.

But in the morning Peggy forgot this little incident altogether, for the morning brought a train of troubles. It was washing-day, and no matter how hard she tried, she could not please Mrs. Bagley, who was tired and cross.

The stove smoked, and the clothes would not dry. Everything went wrong, but no one was to blame, least of all little Peggy, who nevertheless had to suffer for it. One would not think that even a person in a temper would have the heart to scold the gentle little soul, who never thought of answering back, but worked patiently on, with her pretty face full of trouble.

There was no lack of hard work that day, and Peggy's legs ached and ached, and nobody noticed and nobody cared.

When the afternoon came, she was really too tired to go for the violets, but she felt it would not do to neglect so unusual a chance of giving pleasure to Mr. Bolander.

Mrs. Bagley, upon being asked for her permission, declared that, as she was not good for much of anything at home, she might as well go, and Peggy took advantage of the permission without stopping to think of the unkindness of her words.

When she reached the spot where the violets grew, she was so tired, and everything seemed so miserable, that she would have liked for once to have a good cry; but she winked away the tears, trying to think of something pleasant, and the sagest philosopher could not have counselled a wiser course.

She stretched her tired little body on the ground where the bushes hid her from the road, and, laying her hot cheek against the fresh turf, listened to the comfort the chirping little creatures that lived there had to offer.

Presently the sound of wheels aroused her, and then she heard the voice of a little girl exclaim, "O papa! what lovely violets! I want to get out and gather some of them!"

"Well, you must make haste then, Will," answered a man's voice, and Peggy, recognizing it as the voice of Dr. Moran, shudderingly drew back still farther behind the bushes. "You know how Barbarina hates to stand."

"O papa, you go on, and take me up when you come back," cried the little girl. "It takes ever so long to pick violets."

THE CHILDREN STOOD PERFECTLY QUIET, LOOKING GRAVELY AT EACH OTHER.

"I don't know about leaving you here alone," said Dr. Moran, anxiously; but Barbarina approved so strongly of the plan as to overcome the objections of the Doctor, who finally drove off, leaving Wilifred smiling by the roadside.

Thus it was that the meeting took place that he was trying so earnestly to prevent, for in a moment more Wilifred and Peggy were standing face to face.

It was a curious moment, for the children stood perfectly quiet, looking gravely at each other, without speaking.

"You are the little girl they say looks so like me," Wilifred said at length. "I am very glad you are not homelier."

"Oh! did you ever hear of me before?" cried Peggy, humbly. "I saw you yesterday when you were playing tennis. Your papa came to our house, and said he did n't want us to see each

other, and Mrs. Bagley scolded me for going where I am not wanted."

"Well," said Wilifred, smiling, "here we are anyhow, and it is n't your fault, and it is n't mine. I came to gather some violets."

"So did I," said Peggy.

The children stooped down and began to pick the flowers, but Wilifred went on talking.

"I don't see why papa should mind my seeing you. I used to play with a little peasant girl in Nice, and he never cared for that. If you were ugly, he might think it would hurt my feelings, because the boys say you look so like me. But no," said Wilifred slowly, taking another look at the child, — "you are certainly not ugly. How you stare at me! You had better pick your violets, or I shall get them all."

"Well, you may have them. I don't care for the violets now. Your name is Wilifred, is n't it? Mine is Peggy," one little sister announced to the other.

"They are not the same sort of names, are they? Mine is finer than yours, but no matter. I 'll tell you something, Peggy, — you are really prettier than I am."

"O no," gasped modest Peggy, "not nearly as pretty."

"Yes, I can't tell you why, but you are. Perhaps it 's because your eyes are so soft and shining. You look gentle and good. Peggy is n't a pretty enough name for you."

"I was called Margaret at the home."

"The home?" echoed Will, staring a little in turn.

"Yes, that was before I came to the Bagleys'. Where did you live before you came here?"

"O, we travelled about all the time. In Italy, France, Germany, wherever mamma wished to go."

"Well, where were you when you were a baby," persisted Peggy.

"I don't know," said Wilifred; but no sooner had she spoken the words than the almost forgotten story of the nurse flashed into her mind.

"Are you really the sister of the young gentlemen I saw in Mr. Bolander's room? They said you were their sister, but that you and I are like twins. I have a twin sister, but she was taken away from me when we were babies, and I don't know where she is now. I could n't help thinking that perhaps you might be she. Please don't be angry with me," said Peggy, meekly.

Wilifred's cheeks flushed. It was never her wish to tell strangers that the

Doctor was not her own papa, and he himself had once told her that she had better not answer questions like this, it being a subject which only concerned themselves. But here was this strange little girl, with her great steady eyes fixed upon her face, and whose earnestness would have an answer.

"They are not my own brothers," she said at length, "and I too had a twin sister."

The two children looked again steadily at each other. Peggy's face was shining with happiness.

"*You* are my twin sister," Wilifred went on; for, indeed, looking at the face so like her own, who could doubt it?

"Oh, I am so happy! so happy!" laughed little Peggy. "I knew I should find you some time, although the matron said I never would. She used to tell

me how cunning you were, and how nicely we played together when we were babies, and just how it all happened."

"How did it happen?" asked Will.

"Well, you see, a gentleman came one day to the home to choose a little girl for a daughter," Peggy began in the very words she had so often listened to. "It was Dr. Moran, of course, only I never knew his name before, and we were babies just learning to walk and to talk. We were just alike, and the matron always said we were very good and cunning."

"I think we must have been very pretty babies," interrupted Wilifred, with a look at Peggy.

"Yes, we must have been pretty," Peggy assented, with her admiring eyes fixed upon her sister's lovely little face. "At any rate, we looked exactly alike,

and the gentleman at first could n't make up his mind which of us to choose. So while he was looking at us and trying to decide, what should you do, Wilifred, but run up to him, calling, 'Papa! papa!' So he chose you."

"Is that all?" asked Wilifred.

"Yes, that 's about all. The matron said that, before they took you away, she put you down beside me and you patted my face, saying, 'Poor! poor!' just as babies do."

Will leaned forward and repeated the caress, looking pityingly at Peggy. Then she impetuously broke out, "I think I was a real scheming selfish kind of a baby to get ahead of you so! I 'm ashamed of it."

"O no, you were just as sweet and cunning as you could be," protested Peggy. "I was a silly baby, and afraid

of people, I suppose, just as I am now."

"If I had n't gone to him and called him papa he might have chosen you. Then you would now be in my place, and I — why, I would be Mrs. Bagley's servant, would n't I? How I should hate it! but then it would be no worse for me than it is for you. I feel just as if I had cheated you. O Peggy, is it very horrid at the Bagleys'?"

"It 's not so very bad," was the patient answer. "Of course, I don't wear pretty clothes as you do. I 'm just the slavey."

"The slavey?"

"Yes, that 's what the college boys call me."

"Well, it 's a shame, for you are much too pretty for a slavey," broke out Wilifred, and then blushed, feeling that she

had been paying herself a compliment.

"But I *am* a slavey," said Peggy. "I have to wait on the lodgers, you see; there is n't anybody else to do it. And when I am not waiting on the lodgers I am waiting on Mrs. Bagley. It 's hard work, to be sure, and it makes your legs ache sometimes, I can tell you. But then they get rested again."

Wilifred sighed, and an expression of real distress clouded her soft, happy little face. Peggy's life seemed dreary as she thought of the brightness and love in her own, so that her voice was very earnest as she said, "If I could, I would share everything I have with you. Once I knew two twin sisters, and if one had a thing the other had to have it too. That 's always the way with twins. Indeed, Peggy,

I was a selfish baby to get ahead of you so."

"Oh, but you did n't know what you were doing," Peggy cried, "and I 'm sure I 'm ever so glad that you are n't a slavey too. I don't mind it so much except when the young gentlemen make fun of me, — they are so full of fun, you know. But Mr. Bolander won't let them tease me much now. You need n't mind about me. I 'm lots happier, too, for knowing I belong to somebody. It 's nice even if people don't seem to like it. When Mrs. Bagley says to me, 'Well, who are you, I 'd like to know?' I shall say to myself, 'I 'm the sister of Wilifred,' and I shall feel so proud and happy. It never seemed as if I was anybody before. You are so good to me, Wilifred! You might have been cross."

"I should think you are the one to be cross; but I 'm going to try and think of some way of making things fairer. There ought to be a way."

"O, no matter about that. Tell me, are n't you dreadfully afraid of Dr. Moran?"

Wilifred shouted, "He 's the nicest of all the nice things I have." Then, while Peggy listened in wonder, she went on to explain how fond she was of him, and how good he always was to her.

"Do you go to school?" Peggy asked, having tried in vain to imagine Wilifred's life.

"No, I have a governess."

"That 's nice," said Peggy.

"Do you call it nice? I think it 's horrid," answered Wilifred. "But I don't study hard, because it 's summer now, and papa told Miss Weston that I

must n't be taxed. She reads history to me. We are reading about Mary, Queen of Squats."

"That sounds interesting. Was she a dwarf?"

"No, indeed. I saw her once. She was in a tableau, and she was very tall and elegant, in a velvet dress with jewels on it. Old Elizabeth was jealous of her, and had her put to death. She was just going to execution when I saw her."

"O dear!" cried little Peggy; "did n't some one come and save her just at the last moment?"

"No; but don't worry, Peggy. After the curtain fell, she took an ice cream behind the scenes," laughed Wilifred.

"The real one did n't," said Peggy.

"No, but the real one died ages ago. She would have died long before this

anyhow. If you are going to cry, it had better be because you are a slavey."

"O, I don't want to cry for that," said Peggy, cheerfully. "I 'm all right. Tell me some more about yourself."

"Well, there is nothing to cry over about me. I 'm awfully happy, — that is, except when Miss Weston scolds me for not putting my mind on my lessons. O, I hate dreadfully to be scolded. I have to do all sorts of things so as not to get angry. Sometimes I count the *ands* she says, or the *buts*, and when I get ten I make up a sentence that must begin with the letter that ends the last word. It has to be something that fits in, you know, and it has to be something that 's perfectly respectful. I would n't be disrespectful for anything, for papa would n't like that."

"I should think she would want you

to listen when she scolds," said Peggy, who always paid a troubled attention to every word of Mrs. Bagley's.

"Listen! My, you don't know how you have to listen to do it! You had better try some time. Does Mrs. Bagley ever scold you?"

"Y-e-s, when she is roused," said Peggy, delicately. "I 'm so trying, you see. I try not to be trying, but she says it 's natural to me."

"I don't believe it. I believe you are just as good and gentle as you can be. And to think you are my twin! I ought to be the proud one. I 've a dreadful temper. Mrs. Bagley ought to have me."

"What sort of a window was that you said was in your room," asked Peggy

"An oriel window, and it has seats

all round it, and shelves at the sides with books, where one can sit and read. What sort of a window do you have in your room?"

"They call it a skylight," was the cheerful answer. "It's first-rate unless it rains. If it rains, you have to shut it whether the weather is warm or cold, and anyhow the rain leaks in sometimes. It drips down on the bed."

"I should think you would move the bed to some other part of the room."

"There is n't any other part of the room. The bed covers most all the room there is. I asked Mrs. Bagley to let me have her old umbrella to hold up; but she said, if she did, by and by I 'd want her gold watch and fur tippet. She thinks I 'm never satisfied."

"And don't you have anything then that is pleasant?" asked Will.

"Why, yes, of course I do," protested Peggy. "There 's Mr. Bolander. Nobody could be pleasanter than he is. He is my chum."

"I 've seen Mr. Bolander. He came to see Randolph this morning, and he had a great deal to say about the likeness between you and me. He is quite a nice little man," said Wilifred, in a patronizing tone that did not altogether please Peggy; "but, dear me! have n't you anything pleasant beside Mr. Bolander?"

"Yes, I 've a lucky star. I see it at night through the skylight. I hope you have one, too, Wilifred, — it 's such a comfort."

"I don't know whether I 've one or not, and I don't care. What good can a star be to you, when it 's ever and ever so far away?"

"It's a great deal of good," answered Peggy, eagerly. "I never feel half so tired on nights when I can see my star. It makes me feel as if the next day everything was going to be different."

CHAPTER VI.

A BOLD PLAN.

WILIFRED lay back in the grass, trying to think of some plan by which she could share her blessings with Peggy. She had always carried her perplexities to Dr. Moran, but in this case she feared he would not help her. And yet something must be done. Wilifred would have ceased to be herself if she had not made this resolve.

"Poor little Peggy," she thought, "how queer it is, when she is so gentle and good, that papa should not have had her, and that horrid Mrs. Bagley have had me! It 's just what that cross

creature deserves, and perhaps it 's what I deserve too."

And then straightway the strangest idea came into that little girl's head, the like of which would never have occurred to any other than a generous, venturesome child like herself.

She started up in the grass, looking with her bright eyes at Peggy, like a determined little squirrel.

"I knew I could think of a plan," she said. "Now, I 'll tell you what, — we will take turns being Mrs. Bagley's servant. I 'm sure that 's fair. Randolph and Arthur said that, if we were dressed alike, no one could tell us apart; so we have only to change our clothes, and you can go home with papa, and I will go to Mrs. Bagley's. Won't it be funny?"

Peggy, however, naturally shrank

"I KNEW I COULD THINK OF A PLAN," SHE SAID.

back in alarm from this wild scheme, saying, "Oh, we could n't do that! I would be afraid, indeed I would."

But Wilifred would listen to no objections. She dragged her behind the bushes, and by the force of her determination made her disrobe herself and put on her own pretty clothes, while she hastily dressed in those of Peggy.

The children were transformed by the change of clothing, and for some time amused themselves by looking at each other. At length Wilifred said: —

"Once I read a story of two girls who were discontented and wished to change places with each other, but they had to have a fairy to help them. We can do it without a fairy. Those girls in the book had a terrible time, and were glad enough to be themselves again. But this is quite different, is n't it? for I —"

she started to say, "am not discontented and don't really wish to change places with anybody," but thinking this might not be pleasant for Peggy to hear, hastily changed her sentence into — "shall play I 'm a princess in disguise, and so I won't mind being a slavey. I hope you will have a lovely time, and I promise to stand it as long as I can."

"It 's well enough to pretend now," answered Peggy, "but of course we can't do any such thing. Dr. Moran will be coming, and we had better change our clothes again."

"But I say we *will* do it," was the answer, made with a determined nod that set all Will's curls dancing. "Yes, Peggy dear, you must make up your mind to it, for I 'm bent upon being the Bagleys' servant myself for a while. Don't you see it 's no more than fair,

and I should be uncomfortable if I did n't. I want you to have a lovely time, and forget all the horrid things you 've borne. When I go back in your place, what will I have to do first?"

"Well, there will be the lamps and the towels to take round to the different rooms. You must be sure and give the best to Mr. Bolander."

"Yes, he has been good to us, and he shall have the best lamp as a reward," laughed Wilifred. "What else must I do?"

"O Wilifred! you know you will never go there," her sister cried; but she went on obediently to answer her question. "There will be the table to set for supper and the dishes to wash up. *You* could n't do that."

"Plenty well enough for the Bagleys," answered Wilifred, quite undismayed at the prospect. "Go on. What else?"

"You will have to bring in the kindlings for morning, and I think there are some dish-towels to hem."

"Well, I can do them after a fashion, though I must say I never expected to hem Mrs. Bagley's dish-towels. Let's see: I know the house quite well, — the brown one next to the livery stable, and it has high steps to the door."

"Yes, but you must go to the back door, or Mrs. Bagley will scold you," said Peggy. Then, quite overwhelmed, as she well might be, at the boldness of the plan, she cried out, "Oh, I can't let you go there, Wilifred! And besides I would n't dare to take your place at the Morans. Indeed, I would n't dare to do such a thing."

"You can't be my twin, after all, if you are such a coward as that," said Wilifred, laughing at Peggy's fears. "Why,

you will have nothing to do except when the carriage comes to jump in and go home. There will be no dish-towels to hem, I can tell you. You must go and kiss mamma good night before you go to bed, — I always do that."

"Oh!" gasped Peggy, "I never can. Please give me back my clothes, Wilifred. You must."

"And be good to Black Beauty, giving him sugar when you ride him, and take lots of notice of Tramp."

"A dog!" cried little Peggy. "One of Mr. Fullerton's dogs bit me once. I don't like dogs."

"We are not twins as to dogs then," replied Wilifred, regarding her thoughtfully. "Well, Tramp won't bite. He will just wag his tail and lick you."

"Ow! that's just as bad." Peggy drew back, as if the dog were already

present. "I don't like the feeling of their great flapping tongues," she declared.

"Hush! here comes the carriage," suddenly announced Wilifred.

The children looked at each other, Peggy turning very white and whispering, "Give me my clothes! Give me my clothes!"

Barbarina was coming at her fastest pace, and the Doctor must already have seen them.

"It 's too late now," said Wilifred, in a firm voice. "If you do not do as I tell you, we shall get into trouble. You must let no one know what we have done. Good by, Peggy, and be sure and enjoy yourself all you can."

She slipped away behind the bushes, leaving her less resolute companion trembling by the roadside.

In a moment more the carriage stopped at her side, and a gloved hand was held out to her while the Doctor said, "Jump in, jump in, child! Barbarina is in a hurry."

And Peggy, after a moment's painful hesitation, scrambled into the buggy.

"What became of that child?" asked Dr. Moran, looking first on one side of the road and then on the other. "That was the lodging-house woman's child I saw with you, Wilifred. Where has she gone?"

"Off," answered Peggy; and, short as the word is, it cost her a great effort to utter it.

"All the better," the Doctor grumbled. "I wish she would keep off. There is a great social gulf between you and that little girl, my pet. I would rather you would have nothing to say to her."

Not being by nature deceitful, Peggy tried to summon courage to explain what had been done, so the Doctor would stop Barbarina and call Wilifred back; but she was such a timid little thing, and she recalled so distinctly how big and angry he looked when he had sent her away from Delhaven bidding her never to come back again, that she shrank back in the carriage, thankful that Wilifred's large hat shaded her face, and thinking it would be easier to tell him by and by.

CHAPTER VII.

A PRINCESS IN DISGUISE.

WHEN Wilifred saw Peggy get into the carriage and drive away in her place, she felt very strangely. She impulsively scrambled out of the bushes and ran into the road screaming, "Papa! papa!"

But Dr. Moran did not hear her, for which she was immediately very glad.

"I must really be very selfish," she thought. "Here I have had everything to make me happy all this time that Peggy has been a slavey. And now I don't seem to be willing to change places with her. If papa had heard me.

he would certainly have stopped, and off I should have gone with him, just as I did when I was a baby. Yes, I am a horribly selfish little girl." And so scolding herself she took her way to the town.

She ran into the road screaming, "Papa! papa!"

By the time the big boarding-house came in sight she had recovered her spirits, — it was always so easy for Wilifred to do this, — and made her way to the back of the house, feeling that now the play was going to begin.

"It 's going to be ever so exciting," the daring little damsel said to herself,

"and maybe I shall enjoy it after all.—Halloo! Stop! Ugh! I'm all covered with water."

This last remark was meant for Mrs Bagley herself, who, it appeared, was in the act of washing up her back entry, and, just as Wilifred reached the door, flung from it a bucketful of dirty water.

"Dear me!" she cried angrily, "you give your orders as if you were the queen. When I took you from the 'sylum, they did n't give me to understand that you were a scion of royalty."

"I don't like to have dirty water thrown at me, if I 'm not a scion,—whatever that is," answered Wilifred pertly. Her eyes were black, her cheeks red, and her manner as different as possible from meek little Peggy's.

"I s'pose you have been hangin' round that Moran child again, in spite

of what I told you her pa said, an' you are tryin' to imitate her airs. I won't stand 'em long, I can tell you that. Who are *you*, I 'd like to know, anyhow?" Mrs. Bagley never waited for a reply to this question, which she frequently used as an extinguisher of possible pride in Peggy, and immediately went on: "You are an ungrateful viper I took to my bosom from the orphan 'sylum, — an' the most foolish day's work I ever done."

The idea that she had been hanging round the Moran child so pleased Wilifred, that she immediately recovered her good nature.

"Can't I come into the house?" she asked, in what she meant for a very meek tone.

Mrs. Bagley's portly person had blocked up the entrance, but now she

stood aside to let Wilifred pass. The child carried herself in an unusually erect and spirited way, she thought. There was a careless smile on her lips, and her eyes met her own in a strange, fearless way, unlike Peggy's usual gentle glance, which by no means pleased her.

"If you want to go in, step quick," she said, looking at her closely. "You can dry yourself off by the kitchen fire."

Wilifred stepped in. She thought Mrs. Bagley the crossest of women. Peggy could have told her that it was a mood that, with her, always accompanied the process of washing floors. She was by no means the pink of neatness, and such a task was put off as long as possible; but when the deed must be done, Mrs. Bagley rolled up her sleeves, and performed it with a great swashing of water, and much scolding.

Wilifred found the kitchen damp and dismal, and a man whom she rightly conjectured to be Mr. Bagley sitting disconsolately in one corner of it.

"When the missis is in one of her cleaning moods," he had once said to Peggy, "wherever you sit, you are always in the way. I always try to get into the farthest corner, and I can't get far enough into it at that."

He looked up at Wilifred, and told her to bring him his boots, for it was time he should get the colt in from the pasture.

In a field at the side of the house, Wilifred had noticed a pretty little bay horse. Even in her excitement, she had stopped a moment to admire it, and now, as Mr. Bagley seemed reluctant to leave his corner, she volunteered to go for the colt herself.

"You go? That 's a good one," he said. "You would faint away, if he was to come within a rod of you."

"Oh, indeed I would n't!" protested Wilifred. "Do let me go."

"Don't be a silly, Peg. Maloney would bring him in for me; but that colt won't come anear any one but me. You know you could n't catch him."

"Peggy! lor', I should think not," said Mrs. Bagley, who was now wiping her hands on the kitchen roller. "I did n't tell you, 'Lish, that Dr. Moran has been here again, and has offered to send her off somewhere to boardin' school. He takes a deal of interest in Peg, don't he?"

Wilifred's heart gave a terrible thump. Suppose that, before she could change places with Peggy again, she would be whisked away to a boarding-school,

where there would be no chance at all of escape. But from Mrs. Bagley's next words it seemed there was no fear of such a catastrophe.

"I told him," she went on, "that I took the child from the 'sylum to wait on me, an' not to make a fine lady of. I promised 'em there that she would be brought up to work, an' I aint goin' back on my word. Yes, Peggy has got to work; but as for gittin' in the colt, I guess she can't do that."

"Somebody beside me 'll have to do it," answered her husband, throwing down his boot with a groan, and holding his foot out straight before him. "Look at that bunion, will you? I can't get a boot over that. She will have to do it, or you will."

"Well I won't, you know," said Mrs. Bagley. "Peggy, tell Maloney that Mr.

Bagley can't get his boot on, and he will have to get the colt in. He is standing right in the door of the stable."

Wilifred ran out and hailed the man as if she had known him all her life.

"Maloney," she said, "Mr. Bagley wants you to go for the colt. But he won't let you catch him, and I think you had better let me go."

"You, Peggy? Sure, you'd be afraid av the shadder av the baste, let alone the rale animal."

Although he declared it would be useless for either of them to go, he got a box of oats from the stable, and for some time Wilifred watched him run hither and thither, at the sport of the wilful colt.

"I'd like to break the bones av him," Maloney grumbled, coming back to the bars where the little girl stood. "Whin

you git up to him, sure he 's niver there."

Wilifred took the oats, and, slipping past him, walked slowly towards the colt, who was now standing at the opposite end of the enclosure, watching Maloney. She held out her hand and talked to him, paying no attention to Mr. Bagley, who stood with one boot on in the doorway, calling to her.

"Come back here, Peggy, you can't catch him."

Right in the face of this declaration, the pretty colt, with a toss of his head, came trotting up to the child, and after a moment, to the amazement of the two men, followed her along to the bars.

"She aint even got a halter on him," murmured Maloney.

Smiling in triumph, with her hand

just laid on his neck, Wilifred brought the pretty creature up to him.

"You have only to be good and gentle with him," she said. "There now, see how you have jerked his head. He will remember that to-morrow night when you try to get him in."

"To-morrow night you will have to get him in," said Mr. Bagley. "To think how you have played scarey all this time!"

"She is sly; that 's what 's the matter with Peggy," Mrs. Bagley, who had previously joined the group, now broke in. "She pretends to be as meek as a lamb, but she is foxy. Lor', I would n't trust her."

The three elder persons looked curiously at the child, and Maloney laughed.

"You 're a 'cute one," he said.

Mrs. Bagley now declared that she should go at once to her work All the young men had come in, she said, and they would soon be calling for lights.

Wilifred went into the hall, where, as Peggy had told her, she found a row of lamps and a big pile of towels. Taking some of these, she went up-stairs and boldly knocked at one of the doors.

A voice cried, "Come in," and, entering the room, she saw Mr. Bolander seated at a table.

"Well, chicken, you are late to-night. Why did n't you come for your lessons?" he asked; and then, looking up, he suddenly ejaculated, "'Pon my word, that little sister of Moran's looks more like you, Peggy, than you do like yourself, so to speak. It 's a wonderful likeness. I do believe, if you were

dressed in her clothes, you could pass yourself off to Dr. Moran as his own child."

"I think so too," said Wilifred.

"Have you seen her?" asked Mr. Bolander. "Have you ever seen her, Peggy?"

"Why, yes," answered Wilifred, "I have."

"And what did you think of the likeness. Was it not like looking at yourself in the glass?"

Wilifred nodded. If she tried to speak, she was sure she would laugh.

"Well, Miss Wilifred is a lucky little damsel. What, I wonder, would she say to such a life as yours, Peggy?"

"She would say it is horrid, — perfectly horrid," cried Wilifred, hotly. "And it is n't fair."

"So it is n't," said Bolander, drawing

the child up to him and kissing her, for he thought that some especially cruel thing must have happened that day to draw such an expression of discontent from the patient little soul. "Well, never mind, little one," he went on consolingly, "I doubt if she makes as much of her opportunities as you do of yours."

"She does n't, I am sure she does n't," cried poor Wilifred, looking solemn enough, as she thought of her wasted privileges, and contrasted her idle life with the usefulness of Peggy's.

"Well, my little Cinderalla, your time is coming yet. We self-made people have to make the most of our chances, — that 's all. We are poor and lowly at present, Peg, but some time we may be at the top of the heap."

"Slavey! slavey!" cried a voice at that moment in the hall.

> "There 's a nice young gentleman in the next door. Towels are wanted at number forty-four."

hummed Bolander. "That 's Fullerton calling you."

"Me?" exclaimed Wilifred; — and then, recollecting her part, she added, "Why, yes, of course," and ran into the hall.

A young man with a pitcher in his hand immediately hailed her with the order, "Here, you slavey. I want you to cut down stairs and bring me some hot water."

Mr. Fullerton was looking distractedly over the numerous articles on his table when Wilifred, after many difficulties, succeeded in getting what he wanted. Evidently something was missing.

"Look here, Peggy," he said, on see-

"LOOK HERE, PEGGY," HE SAID, "I BELIEVE YOU HAVE BEEN MEDDLING WITH MY PAPERS."

ing the child, "I believe you have been meddling with my papers."

"Oh!" cried Wilifred, "what 'cute, what lovely little dogs these are. What kind of dogs are they?"

"Now, see here, that 's just too thin," said the suspicious Fullerton. "You have pretended to be afraid of those dogs too long to take this sudden interest in 'em. You are trying to throw me off the scent, but I will have an answer. Now what have you done with that paper?"

"I have n't touched it. What pretty brown eyes this dog has, and how affectionate his little brother is! See, he is kissing my hand."

Wilifred had flung herself down upon the floor, and had both dogs in her lap; but suddenly she felt herself lifted up by no very gentle hand, and

deposited at the other end of the room by the wall, while Fullerton, completely mastered by his irritation, stood in front of her.

"You imp," he cried, "I have a mind to break your impudent little head."

"If you touch me, I'll tell papa, and he will have you punished," cried Wilifred with flaming cheeks.

"Your papa indeed! I suppose you mean old Bagley. If you don't want to get yourself into trouble tell me directly what you have done with that paper."

But Wilifred was too angry to answer. "Let me go," she screamed. "Mrs. Bagley! Mrs. Bagley! Mrs. Bagley!"

There was a scuffle of feet in the hall, and immediately the room was filled with young men.

"The slavey is rantankarous, is n't

she?" cried one. "What 's the matter, Fullerton?"

While Mr. Bolander's voice called angrily out, "Do leave that poor child alone. What has she done?"

"She has been meddling with my papers. The first page of my thesis is n't here. And she won't deign to answer a civil question."

"I suppose, as usual, you have frightened her out of her wits. The child is very timid. Let me have her; she will tell me," said Bolander.

But Fullerton only laughed sarcastically, "She looks timid, does n't she?"

Every eye turned upon Wilifred, who was standing with clenched fists and flaming cheeks, glaring at Fullerton.

"Upon my word, she looks like a young tiger," one young man said to another. "I did n't think the slavey had so much spirit."

None of them, however, were as surprised at this sudden exhibition of temper on the part of the usually meek slavey, as Bolander, who nevertheless tried his best to defend her.

"What do you suppose the child wants of your thesis? It's absurd to suspect her of taking it."

"I don't suspect her of taking it," Fullerton answered, "but I think it's quite likely she has thrown it away, thinking it no good, though I've told her no end of times never to touch the things on my table. Do be reasonable, Bolander, and stand back, for she has got to answer me. Now, Peggy, you imp, do you know what has become of that paper?"

Poor Wilifred could make but one answer to all questions. How could she tell what had become of the young

man's property? But her eyes were still angry, and Fullerton believed she knew more than she would confess, and all Mr. Bolander's eloquence could not convince him to the contrary. He declared he would appeal to Mrs. Bagley herself, who should make her obdurate slavey speak.

Much perplexed, Mr. Bolander took the child away. Sitting down in his own room, he drew her in front of him, and looked at her closely.

"Peggy, my little girl," he said, "what 's come over you? I 've seen you bear no end of hard usage with the gentle patience of a lady; but to-day you flared up at nothing at all, like a regular little vixen. I hope you won't let your temper be ruffled up in that ugly shape any more. 'Pon my word, you were not like yourself."

At this, Wilifred struggled a little to free herself, but Bolander held her fast.

"Stand still a bit," he said, "I want to look at you, and make sure you really are my gentle Peg. When you were fizzing out there at Fullerton like a little cat, it seemed as if some other child must be standing in your place."

This was certainly very trying to Wilifred, who felt more and more uncomfortable under Mr. Bolander's clear, searching eyes. She took refuge in silence, and as soon as she could left the room.

What he had said, however, sank deep into her heart, for she was ashamed that Peggy, who had never had any training at all, behaved so much more like a lady than herself, who had enjoyed so many advantages. Beside, she did not like that word vixen,

and she did not mean ever again to have it truthfully applied to herself.

In the evening, when the dish-towels were given her to hem, Wilifred tried to work in the same meek and patient spirit in which she thought Peggy's tasks were performed. The result was best known to herself; but when bed-time came and she folded her work and put it away, it was with a feeling of thankfulness that the day had really come to an end.

The little girl, with a lump in her throat, groped her way up the strange stairs that led to the attic. She did not remember having ever in her life gone to bed without a good night kiss, and she thought she would not be able to sleep for the want of it. Peggy's room was easily found, for the door stood open, showing the cot under the sky-

light, and she flung herself on the bed with the reflection that she could not remain another day in Peggy's place.

It was late before sleep closed those wide, tired eyes of Wilifred. She tossed from side to side, grieving over Peggy's hard lot in life, and wondering if there could not be some easier way than this of helping her.

CHAPTER VIII.

A LITTLE INTERLOPER.

"THE truth is," said Dr. Moran to his wife, "Wilifred is not well. The idea of her being so upset because the dogs jumped on her! Why, they are always jumping on her."

"I don't wonder at all," answered Wilifred's mamma. "I saw you as you drove up to the house, and the moment she got out of the carriage the whole pack flew at her, and almost knocked her down. I'm sure it would have made me very nervous."

"Of course; but Wilifred's nerves are those of a strong, healthy child. It

usually takes a great deal to upset them. Then she cried," went on the Doctor, gravely. "You know how seldom that happens; and when I took her up, she was trembling like a leaf, so I carried her up to her room and told her to lie down for an hour. It was not altogether the dogs, either, for she was not like herself before they jumped on her. I noticed as we were driving home that she seemed languid, and I could hardly get a word out of her. Queer she should run down so all of a sudden."

"I will send Estelle for her by and by, and give her some quinine," Mrs. Moran said. "She is a little run down, perhaps, but it's nothing to worry about."

When the dogs had flung themselves upon Peggy, under the delusion, no doubt, that they were welcoming their

little mistress home, she had received a great shock. Over and over again during the drive to Delhaven she had repented of having consented to Wilifred's plan. Wilifred herself had been too busily occupied in devising a scheme to give happiness to Peggy, to realize how much deceit lay in it; but Peggy's tender conscience gave her no rest from its sharp stings.

As she stepped out of the carriage at Wilifred's beautiful home, she was a very miserable child, and the terror of the dogs, added to all the other uncomfortable feelings, completely unnerved her; so that, losing all control of herself, she burst into a storm of tears.

It was anything but reassuring to Peggy to be caught up in the Doctor's arms, although in the tenderest way, and carried up-stairs. It was not un-

til she had been deposited upon Wilifred's bed, and the Doctor had left her, that she stopped trembling and wiped her eyes.

She had been bidden to lie perfectly quiet for an hour, and Peggy was too obedient to get up, but she looked around the room with a great deal of interest. What a grateful girl the rightful owner of this pretty room must be! No wonder her eyes had that bright, happy look in them. No wonder she was good and generous.

There was the oriel window, even prettier than she had fancied it, and there were books, oh! ever so many books, which of themselves would make any room delightful to Peggy; but nevertheless heartily did she wish that she were in the closet with the skylight, where she rightfully belonged.

When Estelle, Mrs. Moran's French maid, tapped at the door, she was so long in mustering courage to bid her enter, that the girl came to the conclusion that Miss Wilifred had fallen asleep, and was just going away, when Peggy's timid "Come in" was heard.

Estelle had come to dress her for dinner, and many an exclamation she uttered at the tangled condition of the child's bright locks, and the unusual roughness of her hands; but as these were made in French, Peggy was spared any distress on that score.

Peggy made her first acquaintance that day with various devices of the toilet. When the process was over, Estelle led her into another room, and left her.

Here the light was so subdued by the window hangings that Peggy hardly

"HOW DO YOU FEEL NOW, DEAR?" ASKED MRS. MORAN, ANXIOUSLY.

distinguished a figure lying upon the bed, until a soft voice said to her, "Is that you, darling? Come here to mamma."

For a moment Peggy was undecided whether to obey the voice, or to run away and hide herself; but she finally went up to the side of the bed, and looked down on the sweet face upon the pillow. No child would ever be afraid of Mrs. Moran, with her tender eyes and gentle voice, and Peggy let herself be drawn down beside her on the bed, and her heart began to ache with pity for herself that she too had not a mother.

"How do you feel now, dear?" asked Mrs. Moran, anxiously. "Are you rested?"

Now Peggy, as it seemed to her, was never so tired in her life as at this mo-

ment, and, creeping into the mother arms that were held out to her, began to cry. It was such a wonderful thing to be pitied and petted, instead of scolded. It was so nice to have any one seem to care that she was tired, and speak soft and loving words to her. To be sure they were meant for Wilifred, but sore little Peggy listened, and let herself be comforted by them.

By and by, she stopped sobbing altogether, and lay with a soft, contented smile, listening to Mrs. Moran, who was trying to amuse her. She did not understand what was said. She had never heard before of Uncle Jack, who it seems had written her a letter; or of Cousin Morgan, who was in England; or Janey Wells, who was learning to play tennis; but she liked the cooing, tender voice, and for the time felt very happy.

Presently Estelle came in, and announced that dinner was ready.

"Then, darling, you must go," said Mrs. Moran. "Papa will be waiting for you."

At the mention of the Doctor, Peggy began trembling again. She thought she would much rather not have any dinner than to eat it in his company. "Aren't you coming, too?" she asked.

"Why, you know I seldom do," was the answer. "I shall take mine here as usual."

"I wish I could have my dinner with you," said Peggy, in her plaintive tone.

Now the way Peggy clung to her, so different from the independence of Wilifred, went straight to Mrs. Moran's heart. Wilifred had never been known to wish to eat dinner in this darkened chamber in her company, and the ex-

pressed desire of Peggy to do so pleased and astonished her.

Accordingly dinner for two was sent up, and, the servant being dismissed, Peggy in her pretty, patient way, waited on Mrs. Moran, who appreciated each little service, the only flaw in her happiness being Peggy's utter want of appetite.

"It is so strange, dear, that you can eat nothing," she said. "What can be the matter with you?"

"Oh, I aint hungry, that 's all," answered Peggy.

"Don't say aint. It 's ungrammatical."

"I know it," cried Peggy. "Mr. Bolander told me that."

"Mr. Bolander. Why, who is he?"

"Well, he 's — er — Mr. Bolander," faltered Peggy, realizing what she had said.

"Where did you see him, and how did he happen to correct your grammar?" was the natural inquiry.

Peggy might have answered that Mr. Bolander had been to Delhaven that day, for so Wilifred had told her; but she was not practised in deceit, the use of which was now making her thoroughly uncomfortable, and she longed for courage to confess the truth and end it all. "I have seen him in the village," she stammered. "He lives at the big lodging-house there."

"You ought not to go there. You know your papa has forbidden it, for he wishes you to keep away from that little girl who is said to look so much like you. Already you have caught a very inelegant way of expressing yourself. Promise me, Wilifred, that you will remember our wish."

Poor Peggy was wondering how she could promise to keep away from herself, when Estelle came in and interrupted the converstion.

She spent the whole of the evening in Mrs. Moran's room, refusing to leave her, declaring she was happier there than she would be elsewhere. Having spent so many evenings alone, Mrs. Moran was cheered by the little girl's company. She petted Peggy, — who, unlike her sister, enjoyed being made a baby of, — with the reflection that, as Wilifred grew older, she grew more affectionate, and that she would yet be a comfort to her.

Presently the Doctor joined them. Lying beside the mother, with her hand in hers, Peggy was not afraid; but when, sitting down upon the edge of the bed, he drew her over to him, putting his

hand on her forehead and feeling her pulse, all the old fear came back.

"Her head is hot, her pulse too fast, and her heart beats like a trip-hammer," he announnced, unconscious that he himself was the cause of this unhealthy excitement. "It 's very strange the dogs should have given her such a shock."

"They must be kept in the stable in future," Mrs. Moran said, with a decision that pleased Peggy. "This must never happen again."

At about the same hour that Wilifred folded away her dish-towels, Peggy, having been tenderly kissed by both parents, was carried off for a warm bath and put to bed.

In the morning she slept late, and when in some anxiety Mrs. Moran went to call her she found her cheeks flushed,

her head hot, and feeling too tired to get out of bed. The little girl had cried herself to sleep, miserably wishing herself back in Mrs. Bagley's closet, and was really ill, her over-tasked body at last giving out under this mental strain.

Mrs. Moran advised her to lie quietly in bed for the rest of the morning; but Peggy was fearful of losing a chance to escape from her uncomfortable position, and begged to get up. She hoped that in the bright morning light the discovery would be made that she was not Wilifred, but a poor little interloper, who would then be released from her misery. But strangely enough, when there seemed any actual chance of this, her heart beat so fast with fear that she did all she could to prevent it; and as any strangeness in her behavior was

attributed to her evident illness, no such discovery was made.

The Doctor and his two sons were already at the table when Peggy entered the breakfast-room, and all three rose and gave her a morning kiss.

"I declare she does n't look well," said Randolph, trying to get a good look at her downcast face. "Actually pale. It is n't often that Wilifred loses her color."

"And her spirits," added Arthur. "She 's as grave as a deacon, this morning."

Peggy was thankful when the conversation was turned from herself. For a time it ran upon matters in which she took no interest, but at length her attention was claimed by a remark of Randolph's.

"You remember Bolander, don't you,

father? That fine fellow I told you of who is having such a grind to get through college. Well, he was suspended last night."

"So?" said the Doctor, who had caught this exclamation in Germany.

"They say he sent an awfully insulting paper in place of his thesis," said Arthur. "I don't understand how he ever came to do it, for he does n't seem to be that sort of a fellow. He 's tremendously ambitious, you know, and this will be such a set-back."

"But he denies having written the paper, and declares it must have been substituted by somebody for the thesis he did write," said Randolph. "If he can prove this, it will all be made right, but the paper was signed with his name, and things look black for him. Halloo, Wilifred, what's the matter?"

Poor Peggy had listened in horror to the foregoing conversation, and now, in her grief for her friend, and despair at her own helpless situation, burst into tears.

Bolander's fate was instantly forgotten in this distress in the family circle. The Doctor and both boys endeavored to comfort the tearful Peggy, who refused to be comforted, and was finally carried to Mrs. Moran.

"It's my opinion Will is going to have a fever, or something. Who ever heard of her cutting up in this style before? She is uncommon queer this morning," — she heard Arthur say, as she was being borne out of the room by the astonished Doctor.

Left with Mrs. Moran, Peggy soon recovered herself, and presently lay quietly on the bed, while her anxious

nurse found a book and read a lively tale to cheer her. But Peggy's mind was too much occupied by a story of her own to listen. She was thinking of her poor chum, and of the trick Mr. Fullerton had played upon him; for it was clear enough now to Peggy what he had been doing that evening in Mr. Bolander's room. The puzzling question was how a knowledge of Fullerton's act should be conveyed to the faculty, who supposed themselves insulted by her poor righteous Bolander. She stood in much awe of those dignitaries, but felt, if she were only once more the little servant of Mrs. Bagley, she could face them all. As it was, something must be done, — even Peggy saw that.

When the Doctor came in and said that William, the coachman, was going

to the harness shop in town, and she might, if she wished, go with him, she hailed with delight the opportunity of leaving Delhaven, with its possible chance of seeing Wilifred. Dr. Moran said that he also was going to the town, but that he might be obliged to stay there some time, so that she had better go with William. Peggy made no objection to this plan.

As she drove into the town, she looked with strange interest at each familiar feature. It seemed as if a long time must have passed since she had taken that walk to the spot where the violets grew. When Mrs. Bagley's lodging-house was reached, she almost fell out of the carriage in her desire to see what was going on there. After all, there was nothing more interesting to be seen than the slouchy figure of

Maloney, who as usual was standing in the doorway of the stable.

Peggy caught the familiar sound of Mrs. Bagley's voice raised in scolding. The voice came from the kitchen, and there was not much doubt that Wilifred was the victim.

"Oh dear! that 's my scolding," thought Peggy, enviously. "I ought to be there to get it."

William's errand occupied but a few moments, and they were soon upon their homeward way. When again they approached the lodging-house, Peggy asked him to drive by very slowly.

"That 's Barbarina," he said, pointing with his whip at a horse hitched to the post in front of Mrs. Bagley's door. "Your father must be in there, miss."

Peggy wondered what the Doctor could possibly wish at Mrs. Bagley's,

but it did not seem as if it could be anything that concerned herself. Wilifred was not in sight, and she had seen nothing of Mr. Bolander, nor had anything happened as she had hoped. She put her fingers on her eyelids to keep the tears back, and tried to think what she could do.

There were two roads that led from the town to Delhaven. The one usually taken was the shorter, on which the violets grew; but now William turned into the longer road. Peggy's mind was so busy with her own thoughts that at first she did not notice where they were going; but the moment she did, it occurred to her that they would pass by Professor Whitby's house. Her heart thumped with the knowledge that this was a chance of giving him the information that burdened her.

Before she had time to realize the audacity of this plan, the house was in sight, and she had told William to stop there. Then Peggy got out and walked as fast as she could on her trembling little legs to the door.

The Professor's daughter, Miss Mary, a young lady of whom Peggy had often heard the collegians talk, was sitting on the piazza, and, when Peggy asked for her father, looked in at a window, saying, "Papa, you 've a visitor, — little Wilifred Moran."

"Hm-m-m," murmured a voice within. "Well, well, bring her in."

To be introduced as Wilifred made Peggy's errand seem more awkward than before; but there was no chance of retreat now, and being led into the Professor's presence she was forced to explain it.

"I came to tell you about Mr. Bolander, and how Mr. Fullerton played a trick on him."

The Professor took off his glasses, and peered down upon the top of Wilifred's hat, which completely hid Peggy's shy face from view, and gravely addressed the ostrich feather on the crown.

"If you really know anything about the matter, I shall be glad to hear you, Miss Wilifred."

"My name is Peggy, and I 'm the slavey at Mrs. Bagley's. She keeps the lodging-house, you know, where Mr. Bolander lives, and that 's how I came to know anything about it."

It was Peggy's intention to explain the matter as clearly and as quickly as she could.

"The slavey at Mrs. Bagley's," re-

peated the Professor slowly, looking intently at the little figure in the white embroidered frock and befeathered hat; but happily the Professor's thoughts were not upon this unfitting ornament of Mrs. Bagley's servant.

"That 's what the young gentlemen call me," explained Peggy; "all except Mr. Bolander, who calls me his chum."

The kind smile the Professor bestowed upon her emboldened Peggy, and in a few moments she had told all she knew of the affair, and was on her way to Delhaven feeling she had done what she could to set matters straight.

"That little girl is Wilifred Moran," said Miss Mary, having coaxed the whole story from the Professor. "I 've seen her with the Doctor a hundred times. And the child said she was Mrs. Bagley's slavey, did she? And

you believed her? Slaveys don't wear ravishing feathers like that, papa; if they did, who wouldn't be a slavey?"

"I didn't notice what the child wore," answered the Professor, with rather a crestfallen air. "At all events, she told a very straight story."

"I think 'twas a ridiculous story. The idea that Mr. Fullerton would do such a shabby thing is nonsense. I like him a great deal better than little Bolander, with his pink cheeks and big ears."

But these prejudicial features had made no impression on the Professor's mind, while he distinctly remembered that the young man bore a reputable character whereas Mr. Fullerton had been caught in a dozen dark deeds. So he resolved that he would send to Mrs. Bagley and make inquiries concerning

this child, and this he would do at once.

Peggy was so much cheered by the knowledge that she had really been of service to Mr. Bolander, that, in spite of all other discomforting thoughts, she was brighter than she had been at any time since she had left Wilifred at the cross-roads. The Doctor said that the fresh air had done her good, and in the afternoon he himself would take her for a long drive with Prince Edward.

"Wilifred is the only girl I know who would n't be afraid of Prince Edward," observed Arthur. "He shies dreadfully sometimes."

This remark threw poor Peggy into a panic. She tried to console herself with the reflection that there might yet be some escape from the ordeal. The Doctor might change his mind, and have

Barbarina harnessed instead of Prince Edward, or better than that — much better — Wilifred might come and release her: for she did not believe that Wilifred would stay long with Mrs. Bagley. She strolled out to the road, and, weak as she was, walked to the spot where the violets grew, hoping Wilifred might be waiting for her there, but no Wilifred was to be seen. How she longed for courage to present herself in her borrowed plumes to Mrs. Bagley, and tell her the awful truth; but after thinking awhile of her probable reception she walked back to Delhaven. The poor little thing had not resolution enough to extricate herself from the situation Wilifred's persistence had forced her into, and she could only bear it with her usual patience.

So the moments flew by, and soon

Peggy knew there was no escape from the dreaded drive. Greatly trembling,

WATCHING FOR WILIFRED.

she allowed herself to be lifted into the buggy, and as Prince Edward flew over

the ground at what she thought a furious pace, her face grew whiter and whiter, and her heart beat faster and faster, till at last, Prince Edward giving a sudden plunge, she cried out nervously, and begged to be allowed to get out of the carriage.

This odd behavior took the Doctor by surprise, but he held the horse in with a firm hand, and, with many kind and reassuring words to Peggy, turned home again.

He was now convinced that the child was seriously ill, and resolved to take her immediately to the sea-shore, hoping the salt air would tone her up again. Preparations for such a trip were already being made, which added a good deal to Peggy's worries.

Sick and frightened, the little girl clung to Mrs. Moran, trying to tell her

the secret that burdened her conscience. The thought that when it was told she would never again lay her head on that gentle breast filled little Peggy with bitter sorrow.

CHAPTER IX.

FOR PEGGY'S SAKE.

IF Peggy had known all the strange and harrowing experiences through which Wilifred was passing, perhaps she would have nerved herself to confess.

In the cheerful light of the bright, new morning, Wilifred determined to bear Peggy's burdens awhile longer. It would be cruel, she thought, to bring her back to the drudgery of her life, with but such a tantalizing glimpse into the brightness of her own. A whole long merry day, however, would be something to remember, and Wilifred

resolved that, no matter how disagreeable the day at the Bagleys' would prove, she would bear it for Peggy's sake. But oh how the hours dragged! By breakfast time her resolution was in constant need of propping, and if ever Mrs. Bagley was justified in scolding, it was on that miserable morning.

"I declare to goodness I never saw such an exasperatin' young one," she said to Mr. Bagley. "An' stoopid,—my sakes! Just fancy her askin' me where the kindlings is kep', when she 's got 'em in that identical place in the shed every mornin' these three years. I can tell Mr. Bolander education is wasted on *her*. Lor', I wish he 'd teach her common sense instid of Latin."

After the breakfast dishes were washed, Wilifred found that she had work to do up-stairs. It was the time

the young men's rooms were put in order, and she followed Mrs. Bagley about, helping in various ways. Presently she was left with a dust-pan and brush to sweep down the stairs.

It was then, when Mrs. Bagley had departed to the lower regions, that Mr. Bolander called her. "Come in here, Peg," he said softly, holding open the door of his room. "I want to tell you something. I 'm down on my luck."

"What 's the matter?" asked Wilifred, with some interest, but by no means the lively concern that Peggy would have shown.

"I 've been suspended. Fact, Peg. A pretty how do you do, is n't it, for a fellow that can hardly pay his way on a straight course?"

"What do you mean by suspended?" asked Wilifred.

"Why, Peg! As if you did n't know? Don't you remember that Lorton was suspended the first of the year on account of that lark."

"O Mr. Bolander," exclaimed Wilifred, brightening. "What have you been up to?"

Such a look of surprise as Bolander gave her!

"See here, child," he broke out sharply; "that 's a regular give away. I suspected you yesterday, and now I 'm certain. At my tale of woe, Peggy would have melted in sorrow. Where is Peggy?"

For a moment Wilifred was silent; but she knew it was of no use to try and deceive this sharp young man, whose air of disapproval stirred her conscience into remorse for the deceit she had practised.

"Peggy is at Delhaven, pretending to be me," she finally confessed. "I made her go, though she did n't want to. She was afraid, you know. It 's all my fault."

"Well, 'pon my word," said Bolander, "if that is n't a scheme! Afraid! I believe you. She must be scared stiff by this time. Poor Peg!"

"Oh, don't you think she is enjoying it? I shall be cross enough if she is n't." Wilifred scowled savagely in a mighty effort not to cry. Her plan seemed to be turning out so miserably, and the duplicity of it seemed more and more appalling.

By adroit questions Bolander was soon in possession of the whole story.

"Well, I see you meant well," he said at length, "but there is a heap of harm done by people who mean well. I suspect you 've made trouble enough."

"Oh!" cried Wilifred, "I shall tell papa everything. He is so good I know he 'll forgive me, and I 'm sure he ll let me help Peggy."

"Well, I hope he will. She is in a bad enough fix now, poor child."

"Do you think Mrs. Bagley will be very angry with her?"

"I think, metaphorically speaking, my dear, she will take her blessed little head off."

"Oh dear!" said Wilifred, miserably, "I feel as if I was a horrid Elizabeth, and Peggy poor sweet Mary, Queen of Squats. Oh dear! what can I do?"

"Do you think Mrs. Bagley suspects anything?" asked Bolander, smiling to himself at this belittling title of Scotland's stately Queen.

"No. I 'm sure she does n't," answered Wilifred, "but she is awful

angry with me, — that is, with Peggy. You see, I 've made so many blunders this morning, and I broke a whole lot of her dishes. They were dreadfully ugly, but she said they were real heirlooms, and I would have to do without any more clothes until she had saved up enough money to buy some others, — that is, of course, not really I, but Peggy. And if they cost as much as she says, Peggy will have to wear her old clothes until she 's grown up. But no, I 'm sure papa will buy Mrs. Bagley some more heirlooms."

"At the heirloom counter, I suppose," grinned Bolander.

"Oh don't make fun," pleaded Wilifred, "but tell me what I can do."

"I really don't know," said Bolander. "But let me see, — yes, this will be the best way. At four o'clock Mrs. Bagley

always lets Peggy come here for her lessons, and at that time I will take you home, and bring Peggy back."

"Oh!" implored Wilifred, clasping Bolander's arm, "you won't let Mrs. Bagley know that she is n't I. I mean that I was n't she. Oh, you know what I mean."

"I 'm not going to aid and abet you in any of your deceitful practices," was the severe answer; but Bolander could not forbear a reassuring pat on Wilifred's head, for he knew her fears were all for Peggy, and he shared them. "I shall try to propitiate the great Bagley, and persuade her to make Peg's sentence light."

Here a sharp and peremptory call for Peggy forced Wilifred to hurry downstairs. The sharp voice proceeded from the room off the "settin'-room," which

was Mrs. Bagley's own, in which she was now flying about in a frantic endeavor to don her robes of state.

"That 's Mrs. Brewer at the door, Peg," she called out, "but don't go yet. You know sence the bell 's broke we don't hear it first time it 's rung. Lor', this waist aint within three inches of meetin'. 'T is a wonder how I can flesh up so, slavin' the way I do in the kitchen. Well, I spose I 'll have to throw a shawl round me, an' let it go 's it is. What are you laughin' at, you impudent thing? Go to the door this minute; don't you see I 'm all dressed?"

Wilifred opened the door, not to find Mrs. Brewer, but a gentleman, who looked at her very sharply, she thought, as he asked for Mrs. Bagley.

He had called to make inquiries about Peggy, who, he said, had just been to

Professor Whitby's to give information concerning Mr. Bolander.

"Peggy aint been out of the house this mornin'," Mrs. Bagley assured him. She was feeling very hot in the shawl, and very cross, because of her disappointment about Mrs. Brewer. "She could n't have gone to Professor Whitby's, and as for Mr. Bolander I don't know nothin' of the trouble he 's got into; but I do say no respectable young man lodger would get suspended right in the middle of the year, an' leave my room vacant."

Mrs. Bagley did not see fit to inform Wilifred, or rather Peggy, of the object of this call. She was afraid the child might get an idea by it that she was a person of importance.

The gentleman had hardly gone when the door-bell was again rung, and this

time Wilifred was sent immediately to answer it.

Imagine her surprise at seeing Dr. Moran, who smiled, and said pleasantly, "Is Mrs. Bagley at home?"

In her pleasure in seeing him she forgot Peggy, and looked up in his face and laughed; and if his eyes had not been fastened upon the advancing figure of Mrs. Bagley he would certainly have discovered that this merry child was Wilifred, instead of the shy, melancholy little creature he had left at home.

Before she could obey the impulse that urged her to fling herself into his arms Mrs. Bagley came forward, and, motioning her to go down stairs again, led the Doctor into the parlor.

Wilifred ran off, feeling that after all she was very glad she had not betrayed

herself, and spoiled Mr. Bolander's plan for helping Peggy. At four o'clock, as far as she was concerned, everything would be over, and how she would laugh at her papa for not knowing her.

Mrs. Bagley had a long interview with Dr. Moran. When it was over she came down into the kitchen where Wilifred was, and informed her that he was a perfect gentleman. Her face was wreathed in smiles. She was absolutely pleasant.

"Just think of it, Peggy, my dear, he insists upon sending you to boarding school, and he has fixed things up real comfortable for me while your 're gone. I 'm going to have Ann Sarah Martin here to help me with the work."

"How soon am I going?" asked Wilifred.

"This afternoon. He 'pears to be in a terrible hurry and can't wait. He says he has made arrangements for you at the boarding school, and will telegraph 'em when to expect us. Well, I shall have to fly round some to get ready."

"But I have n't any clothes!" protested Wilifred, thinking of the very limited stock she had examined in Peggy's room. "You can't go to boarding school without clothes."

"There 's gratitude for you!" exclaimed Mrs. Bagley, sitting down with a gasp, and addressing the flies on the ceiling. "No clothes! An' this is the child I took an' brought up decent, when she had n't a friend of her own, — fed her with food from my own table, with two helps more often than not, an' a raging, tearing appetite for everything

"I 'M NOT PEGGY. YOU MUST N'T TAKE ME TO BOARDING SCHOOL."

that 's costly. No clothes! An' I 've taken 'em off my back and given 'em to her."

The stroke of the clock here brought a realizing sense of the value of time, and Mrs. Bagley jumped to her feet crying, —

"Mercy! the train starts at four, an' here it is twelve. I must go right to work; but if I get through so 's to have the time for it, if I won't shake the pride out of you. You 've had a heap more clothes than ever you deserved. However, Dr. Moran has promised to send me a box of things for you; but if he knew what an ungrateful thing you are, he 'd keep 'em at home."

"Mrs. Bagley," broke out poor Wilifred, "I 'm not Peggy. You must n't take *me* to boarding school."

"You are not Peggy! Lor' me! Who are you? Queen Victoria?"

"I 'm Wilifred Moran. Peggy and I have exchanged places."

"Exchanged fiddlesticks!" was the contemptuous reply. "I 'm in too much of a hurry for nonsense. Now fly round and get them potatoes pared for dinner."

"Oh, but I can't stop! I 'm going home and will send Peggy right back to help you. I think she will be glad to go to boarding school."

Wilifrid's private thought was that there could be no mode of life more disagreeable than this as Mrs. Bagley's servant, but she prudently kept this belief to herself.

Mrs. Bagley, who was now clattering about in a hasty effort to put her kitchen in order, paid no attention to Wilifred's speech.

"Get to work, Peg; get to work,"

she cried, raising her voice above the clatter of the kettles and pans. "We 've got to be off by four, and there 's no time to lose."

It was distressingly evident that she did not give a second thought to the little girl's story, and for the first time Wilifred was frightened. Not very much frightened, for she was sure she could presently set matters straight, but frightened enough to make her tone very serious as she cried, "Oh! if I could only see papa!"

"Papa!" repeated Mrs. Bagley. "Of all simpletons! But I see what you are doing, — pretending you are that child of Dr. Moran's. I done such things myself when I was a young one, but I took care to keep it to myself. You opened the door for your *papa*, — queer he did n't know you, aint it?"

"Oh, he has got mixed up," Will cried, eagerly. "I must go and explain to him."

"Folks don't have to explain to their own father whose child they are. Now quit this nonsense, Peg, and go to work. Mr. Fullerton says you aint to be trusted, an' I believe him."

Wilifred now realized the uselessness of talking to Mrs. Bagley, but what was she to do? Time was precious. The moments that should be employed in finding Peggy were slipping away. She could not wait for Mr. Bolander.

The entry door was wide open, and as the little girl looked anxiously out into the sunshine, she resolved to waste no more words. She ran out and flew like an arrow along the street, laughing at Mrs. Bagley, who was panting behind her.

Escape seemed easy until Maloney, being called, joined in the pursuit. It was nothing for him to overtake a nine-year-old girl, and poor Wilifred was soon marched back to the kitchen. Here she was watched too closely to escape again, and was made to go on with Peggy's tasks.

Her first thought was of Mr. Bolander. If she could see him, he would convince Mrs. Bagley that what she said was true; but she begged in vain to be allowed to call him.

Mrs. Bagley declared that she was already "all of a tremble," and she would have no more scenes. She was afraid, although she did not say this to Wilifred, that, if things did not go smoothly, the arrangement she had made with Dr. Moran, and which was very much to her own advantage, would

fall through, and she was now just as anxious as he was that Peggy should go to school.

The Doctor's coachman brought the promised box, the contents of which Wilifred recognized as some of her own clothes which had been cast aside. How well she remembered the day Estelle had folded them up, with the remark that some poor child would be glad enough to get them!

Mrs. Bagley showed them to her, thinking she would no doubt be pleased and grateful. It must be an odd feeling to receive one's own cast-off clothing as a gift, and Wilifred did not know whether to laugh or cry; but in spite of her protestations it was packed up in a little black trunk with some of the best of Peggy's clothing.

Time flew like a bird. One o'clock

struck, — two — three. At half past three Wilifred had been dressed and locked up in the parlor for safe keeping until the carriage came, which would be at a quarter before four.

In a fever of excitement she watched by the window for the return of Mr. Bolander, who had been out of the house since dinner; for on Mr. Bolander all her hopes now hung.

The clock on the mantle shelf, unmindful of her agony, ticked away those last moments. Five of them had already gone; five more flew by. With beating heart poor Wilifred searched the street for the figure of Mr. Bolander, which, alas! was nowhere visible.

The only person in sight was Maloney, who, as Mrs. Bagley opened the parlor door, came up the front steps.

"There bes a fair prospect of bad

weather, mum," he said, following her in. "Did ye moind the big cloud in the wist? An' will ye be goin' rain or shine, Mis Bagley?"

Wilifred waited breathless for the answer.

"Lor', what should I care for a shower? We 'll be as safe and as dry in the cars as anywhere else. Come, Peggy, be quick. Here 's the carriage."

CHAPTER X.

ALL 'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

IT was a terrible night, and Peggy had wandered sadly from window to window, where the rain was smiting the panes in furious gusts. The family were all together in the library where they had been watching the thunder-storms, as one after another gathered and burst. The wind swayed the tall pines and tossed the lighter foliage of the elms, while the woodbine along the piazza was whipped into strings.

Another storm was now coming, and as Peggy listened to the thunder and watched the lightning as it played

across the sky, she thought it an excuse for a further delay in speaking the words that had been all the evening on her lips. For she had at length resolved that she would bear this life of deceit no longer.

From time to time she glanced at Mrs. Moran, her eyes filled with wistful love, and her heart with a dread of the lonesome, loveless life at Mrs. Bagley's. As for the Doctor, poor Peggy dared not look at him at all. What would he say, she wondered, when he knew how he had been deceived? She had no doubt that he would instantly send her out of the house, and she would have to go home with the thunder crashing over her head and the lightning blinding her eyes. Then came the thought that perhaps Mrs Bagley would be too angry with her to take her back

in the old place, and then what would become of her?

So the evening wore away, until at last the boys went up-stairs to their gymnastics, and Mrs. Moran folded up her work, and Peggy, knowing that she could delay no longer, cleared her aching throat, and began, "Dr. Moran —"

But a sudden clap of thunder drowned her voice, and the Doctor got up, and, looking out of the window, cried, "That struck near. 'T is a terrible night. I pity the poor wretches that have to be out in it."

"Then you must pity me," suddenly sobbed the poor child.

She fell down at Mrs. Moran's side, and hid her face in her lap. She was trembling from head to foot, and her voice shook with tears. Mrs. Moran held her close, while the Doctor, with

SHE FELL DOWN AT MRS. MORAN'S SIDE, AND HID HER FACE IN HER LAP.

an anxious face, stooped down beside her.

"What ails the child? Wilifred, my darling, what is it?" he cried.

"Oh, I 'm not Wilifred," Peggy whispered, in her piteous little voice, and cowering away from him. "I 'm Wilifred's sister, and only Peggy. Oh, don't be angry! don't be angry!"

"She is delirious. I will take her up-stairs, and she must be put immediately to bed," said the Doctor gravely. And he would have lifted her up, only at just that moment there was a sound of light, hurrying little feet in the hall, and in from the rain and the dark night, wide-eyed and pale, came Wilifred herself, crying, in her own sweet, confident tone, "O papa! papa! I have come to you at last. You nearly sent me to boarding school instead of Peggy."

No one could doubt which of the two children was the true Wilifred, for it was easy enough to detect the difference between this bright, buoyant child, and the sad-eyed, shrinking little thing who had been with them in her place.

The Doctor sprang forward and caught her in his arms, finding with thankfulness that she at least did not shrink from his kisses.

"Papa, O papa!" Wilifred went on, "I have had such a fearful time. I thought I should never get back to you and mamma again, for Mrs. Bagley would n't believe what I told her. I deserved it all because I had deceived you; though I did n't mean to deceive you, but only to do something for poor, poor Peggy."

Unnoticed in the surprise Wilifred's

arrival had caused, Peggy had crept aside, and now stood watching them with her great, mournful eyes.

Wilifred, now turning in the Doctor's arms, held out her hands to her, crying, "O Peggy! dear Peggy! I 'm so sorry, but I 've made everything harder for you. Mrs. Bagley is angry, oh! dreadfully angry, and I don't know what she will do to you."

"I knew she 'd be roused," murmured Peggy; "but no matter, I 'm not afraid, — not so very much afraid." But her teeth chattered, and she trembled violently. Presently she closed her eyes, and for a moment everything was dark; and then suddenly she realized that she was in Mrs. Moran's arms, that Wilifred was holding her hand, and, stranger than all, the Doctor looking down kindly upon her with no displeasure at

all in his face. For the first time, her heart free at last of its burden, and encouraged by his glance, she looked up and smiled at him. "I ought not to have come here, I know," she said, "but I will go back now."

"No, you sha'n't go back, Peggy," cried Wilifred, in generous pity.

She put her arms in a sweet protecting way around her sister, and looked up pleadingly at the Doctor.

"Papa will adopt you instead of me. Oh, yes, papa, keep Peggy. She is better than I. She is gentle and good. I won't be selfish, but go back to Mrs. Bagley. Yes, Mr. Bolander will take me back again instead of you, Peggy."

"Nonsense, you shall neither of you go back there," cried a voice that Peggy with much wonder recognized as the voice of Mr. Bolander; for she did not

know that he had come in just after Wilifred.

"I have a plan for Peggy," he said, turning to Dr. Moran, and mopping his forehead, for he had been much overcome at Peggy's faintness. "I mean to take her to my grandmother, who lives on a farm, and will at least be kind to her. I shall manage to take care of the child somehow, for she sha'n't go back to Mrs. Bagley."

"Well, she is n't fit to go anywhere to-night," said the Doctor composedly.

He took Wilifred on one knee, and pulled Peggy upon the other, saying, as he kissed first one child's cheek and then the other's, "It 's rather a pity, Mr. Bolander, to separate twin sisters. I told Mrs. Moran that when this pair were babies: I really have n't the heart to do it again."

"We will never separate them," cried Mrs. Moran, getting up, and hovering over the children like a sweet, maternal dove in a crocheted shawl. "I could not bear now to give up little Peggy."

"All 's well that ends well," it is said, and what ending could be better than this? Peggy almost cried for joy, and Wilifred clapped her hands, shouting, "'T is a better plan than mine. I never thought of anything half as good."

Then together the children told what had taken place between them on the day they had gathered the violets.

"And to think, papa," said Wilifred, at length, "that you never knew me when I opened the door for you at the Bagleys'. But 't was lucky I could n't cheat Mr. Bolander, for if I had, I should have been whirled off to boarding school. Oh, how glad I was when, just at the

last moment, as they were putting me into the carriage, he came running up, crying, 'You have the wrong child there, Mrs. Bagley. Hold on, Maloney, or I 'll have you up for kidnapping.' And Mrs. Bagley scolded, and I screamed, and then there was that awful clap of thunder, and the rain came down. That 's why we were so long coming here."

Peggy at once became Margaret Moran, and was as dearly loved as her sister. In her sweet and thoughtful way, she always showed a deep affection for both parents, but in particular devoted herself to her adopted mother, as Wilifred did to the Doctor.

With her help the cloud over Bolander was dispelled. He was soon on intimate terms with the Morans, and many of the pleasures that came into his life were due to grateful Peggy.

She became a great student, and made so much of her advantages, that when, many years later, she graduated from college, Bolander, now a famous physician, declared that she knew so much he was actually afraid of her.

The likeness between the sisters grew stronger each year. In an atmosphere of love and sympathy, Peggy conquered her timidity, and, as she grew strong and healthy, wore the blooming radiance so natural to Wilifred, who in turn caught the graces of patience and gentleness from her sweet twin sister.

THE END.

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JOLLY GOOD TIMES AT HACKMATACK.

"There," said Miss Patty, "that 's a surtout as *is* a surtout."
PAGE 259.